BELL'S EDITION

The POETS of GREAT BRITAIN COMPLETE FROM CHAUCER to CHURCHILL.

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CHAUCER VOL. VIII.

And gan her minde, and reson to him take,
But wondir sore he was abashed iwis.

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THE

POETICAL WORKS

OF

GEOFF. CHAUCER.

IN FOURTEEN VOLUMES.

THE MISCELLANEOUS PIECES

From *Urry's* Edition 1721,

THE CANTERBURY TALES

From *Tyrwhitt's* Edition 1775.

Grete well CHAUCER whan ye mete----
Of ditees and of ſonges glade,
The which he---made,
The londe fulfilled is over all. GOWER.

My maiſter CHAUCER---chiefe poete of Bretayne----
Whom all this londe ſchulde of ryght preferre,
Sith of our langage he was the lode-ſterre----
That made firſt to dyſtylle and rayne.
The gold dewe dropys of ſpeche and eloquence
Into our tunge thrugh his excellence. LYDGATE.

The honour of Engliſh tong is dede----
My mayſter CHAUCER, floure of eloquence,
Mirrour of fructuous entendement,
Univerſel fadir in ſcience----
This londis verray treſour and richeſſe----
The firſte fynder of our fayre langage. OCCLEVE.

Venerabill CHAUCER, principall poete but pere,
Hevinly trumpet, orlege and regulere,
In eloquence balme, condict and diall,
Mylky fountane, clere ſtrand, and rois riall,
Of freſche endite throw Albioun iland braid. DOUGLAS.

O reverend CHAUCER! roſe of rethouris all,
As in oure toung flour imperial
That raiſe in Brittane evir, quha reidis right
Thou beiris of Makers the triumphs royall,
The freſche enamilt termes celeſtiall:
This mater couth haif illuminit full bricht,
Was thou nocht, of our Inglis all the light,
Surmounting every toung terreſtriall
As far as Mayi's morrow dois midnight. DUNBAR.

VOL. VIII.

EDINBURG:
AT THE Apollo Press, BY THE MARTINS.
Anno 1782.

THE

POETICAL WORKS

OF

GEOFFREY CHAUCER.

VOL. VIII.

CONTAINING HIS

MISCELLANEOUS PIECES, *viz.*

THE ROMAUNT OF THE ROSE,
TROILUS AND CRESEIDE.

But natheles certain
I can right now no thrifty Tale sain,
But CHAUCER, (though he can but lewedly
On metres and on riming craftily)
Hath sayd hem in swiche English as he can
Of olde time, as knoweth many a man;
And if he have not sayd hem, leve brother,
In o book, he hath sayd hem in another----
Who so that wol his large Volume seke. TALES, *ver.* 4465.

Dan CHAUCER, well of English undefil'd,
On Fame's eternal bead-roll worthy to be fil'd----
Old Dan Geffrey, in whose gentle spright
The pure well-head of poetry did dwell----
He whilst he lived was the soveraigne head
Of shepherds all------- SPENSER.

Old CHAUCER, like the morning star,
To us discovers day from far;
His light those mists and clouds dissolv'd
Which our dark nation long involv'd;
But he descending to the shades
Darkness again the age invades. DENHAM.

CHAUCER, him who first with harmony inform'd
The language of our fathers---His legends blithe
He sang of love or knighthood, or the wiles
Of homely life, thro' each estate and age
The fashions and the follies of the world
With cunning hand portraying-----
Him who in times------
Dark and untaught began with charming verse
To tame the rudeness of his native land. AKENSIDE.

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THE ROMAUNT OF THE ROSE.

And whilom of this unite
Spake Tullius in a dite,
A man ſhould makin his requeſt
Unto his frende that is honeſt,
And he godely ſhould it fulfill,
But it the more were out of ſkill,
And otherwiſe not graunt therto,
Except only in cauſis two.
  Yf men his frende to dethe would drive
Let him be beſy to' ſave his live.
  Alſo if men wollen him aſſaile,
Of his worſhip to make him faile,
And hindrin him of his renoun,
Let him with ful entencioun
His devir done in eche degre,
That his frendè ne ſhamid be.
  In theſe two caſis with his might,
Taking no kepe to ſkill nor right,
As ferre as love may him excuſe,
This ought no man for to refuſe.
  This love that I have tolde to the
Is nothing contrarie to me;
This wol I that thou folowe wele,
And leve the t'othir every dele;

This love to vertue al entendeth,
The t'othir folis blent and ſhendeth.
An othir love alſo there is
That is contrary unto this,
Which deſire is ſo conſtrainid
That it ne is but will fainid;
Away fro trouth it doth ſo varie
That to gode love it is contrarie,
For it maymith in many wiſe
Sikè hertis with covetiſe;
All in winning and in profite
Suche love yſettith his delite:
This love ſo hangith in balaunce,
That if it leſe his hope parchaunce
Of lucre that he' is ſet upon
It woll failin and quenche anon,
For no màn maie be amorous,
Ne in his living vertuous,
But if he lovin more in mode
Men for 'hem ſelfe than for ther gode;
For love that profite doth abide
Is falſe, and bidith not no tide:
Soche love comith of Dame Fortune,
That litil while woll contune,
For it ſhall chaungin wondir ſone,
And take eclips as doth the mone,
Whan that ſhe is from us ylet
Through erth, that betwixtin is ſet

The ſonne and her, as it may fall,
Be it in partie or in all:
The ſhadowe makith her benies merke,
And her hornis to ſhewin derke
That part where ſhe hath loſt her light
Of Phebus fully and the ſight,
Till whan the ſhadowe' is ovir paſte
She' is enlumined agein as faſte
Through the brightnes of the ſonne bemes,
That yevith to' her againe her lemes:
That love is right of ſuche nature,
Now is it faire and now obſcure,
Now bright, now clipſy of manere,
And whilom dimme and whilom clere,
As ſone as poverte ginnith take,
With mantil and with wedis blake
Hidith of love the light away,
That into night it tournith day,
It may not ſein Richeſſe ſhine
Till that the blacke ſhadowis fine,
For whan that Richeſſe ſhinith bright
Love recovereth áyen his light,
And whan it failith he wol flit,
And as ſhe greveth ſo grevith it.

Of this love herith what I ſaie:
The riche men are ylovid aie,
And namely tho that ſparande bene,
That wol not waſhe ther hertis clene

Of the filthe nor of the vice
Of gredy brenning avarice.
The riche man ful fonde is i-wis
That wenith that he lovid is;
If that his herte it understode
It is not he; it is his gode:
He may wel wetin in his thought
His gode is loved and he right nought;
For if he be a nigarde eke
Men wol not set by him a leke,
But hatin him, this is the sothe.
Lo what profite his catil dothe!
Of every man that may him se
It getteth him nought but enmite,
But he amende him of that vice,
And know himselfe he is not wise.
Certis he should aie frendly be
To get him love, also ben fre,
Or els he is not wise ne sage,
No more than is a gote ramage.
That he not lovith his dede proveth,
Whan he his richesse so well loveth
That he wol hide it aie and spare,
His porè frendis sene forfare,
To kepin aie his ill purpose,
Till that for drede his eyin close,
And til a wickid deth him take
Him had levir a sondre shake,

And let al' his limmes a sondre rive,
Than leve his richesse in his live;
He thinketh to part it with no man;
Certain no love is in him than,
For how should love within him be
Whan in his hert is no pite?
That he trespasith well I wate,
For eche man knowith his estate,
For wel him ought to be reproved
That lovith nought ne is not loved.
  But sithe we arne to Fortune comen,
And hath our sermon of her nomen,
A wondir will I tell the now,
Thou herdist nere suche one I trow;
I n'ot where thou me levin shall,
Although sothfastenesse it be all,
As it is writtin, and is sothe,
That unto men more profite dothe
The frowarde fortune and contraire
Than doth the sote and debonaire;
And if the thinke it is doutable,
It is through argument provable,
For Fortune debonaire and softe
Yfalsith and begilith ofte,
For liche a mothir she can cherishe,
And milkin as dothe a norice,
And of her gode to him ydeles,
And yeveth 'hem parte of her joweles,

With grete richis and dignite,
And 'hem ſhe hoteth ſtabilite
In a ſtate that is nothing ſtable,
But chaunging aie and variable,
And fedith 'hem with glory veine,
And worldely bliſſe nothing certeine:
Whan ſhe 'hem ſettith on her whele
Than wenin thei to be right wele,
And in ſo ſtable ſtate withall
That nevir thei wene for to fall;
And whan thei ſette ſo high to be
Thei wene to have in certainte
Of hertly frendis to grete nombre,
That nothing might ther ſtate encombre;
Thei truſt 'hem ſo on every ſide,
Wening with 'hem thei would abide
In every perill and miſchaunce
Withoutin chaunce or variaunce
Bothè of catil and of gode,
And alſo for to ſpende ther blode,
And al ther membris for to ſpill,
Onily to fulfill ther will;
Thei maken it whole in many wiſe,
And hotin 'hem ther full ſervice,
How ſore ſo that it do 'hem ſmerte
Into ther very nakid ſherte;
Herte and hande alſo whole thei give,
For all the time that thei may live,

So that with this ther flatiry
Thei makin folis glorifie
Onely of ther wordis ſpeking,
And han chere of a rejoyſing,
And trow 'hem as the Evangile;
And it is al falſhede and gile,
As thei ſhal afterwardis ſe;
Whan thei arne fal in poverte,
And ben of gode and catil bare,
Than ſhould thei ſene who frendis ware,
For of an hundrid certainly,
Nor of a thouſande ful ſcarſly,
Ne ſhall thei finde unnethis one
Whan poverte is comen upon.
  For thus Fortune that I of tell,
With men whan that her luſt to dwell,
Maketh 'hem to leſe ther coniſaunce,
And noriſheth 'hem in ignoraunce.
  But frowarde Fortune and perverſe,
Whan high eſtates ſhe doth reverſe,
And makith 'hem to toumble doune
Of her whele with a ſodaine tourne,
And from ther richeſſe dothe 'hem fle,
And plongith 'hem in poverte,
As a ſtepmothir envious,
And laieth a plaiſtir dolorous
Unto ther hertis woundid egre,
Whiche is not tempered with vinegre,

But with poverte' and indigence,
For to ſhewe by experience
That ſhe is Fortune verilie,
In whom no man ne ſhould affie,
Nor in her yeſtis have fiaunce,
She is ſo ful of variaunce.
Thus can ſhe makin hie and lowe,
Whan thei from richeſſe arnè throwe,
Fully to knowin without were
Frende of affecte and frende of chere,
And whiche in love weren trew and ſtable,
And whiche alſo weren variable,
Aftir Fortunè ther goddeſſe,
In poverte', eithir in richeſſe,
For all that yeveth here out of drede
Unhappe yberith it in dede,
For Infortunè lette not one
Of frendis whan Fortune is gone,
I mene tho frendis that woll fle
Anone as entrith poverte;
And yet thei wol not leve 'hem ſo,
But in eche place where that thei go
Thei callin 'hem wretche, ſcorne, and blame,
And of ther miſhappe 'hem diſſame,
And namely ſuche as in richeſſe
Pretendith moſte of ſtableneſſe,
Whan that they ſawe 'hem ſet on lofte,
And werin of 'hem ſucoured ofte,

And moſte iholpe in all ther nede,
But now thei take no manir hede,
But ſeine in voice of flatirie
That now appereth ther folie
Ovir al wher ſo that thei fare,
And ſinge, Go, farewel, Feldeſare.
  Allè ſuche frendis I beſhrewe,
For of trewe frendes there be to fewe,
But ſothfaſt frendes, what ſo betide,
In every fortune wollen abide;
Thei han ther hertes in ſuche nobleſſe
That thei n'il love for no richeſſe,
Nor for that Fortune may 'hem ſende
Thei wollen 'hem ſocour and defende,
And chaungin for ſofte ne for ſore;
For who his frende loveth evirmore,
Though men drawe ſwerdis him to ſlo,
Thei may not hewe ther love a two;
But if in caſe that I ſhall ſay,
For pride and ire leſe it he may,
And for reprove by nicete,
And diſcovering of privite
With tongè wounding, as felon,
Through venemous detraccion.
  Frende in this caſe wol gon his way,
For nothing greve him more ne may,
And for nought ellis wol he fle
If he love in ſtabilite:

And certaine he is well begone
Among a thousande that findeth one,
For there ne may be no richesse
Ayenst frendship of worthinesse,
For it ne may so high attaine
As may the valoure, sothe to saine,
Of him that lovith trewe and well:
Frendship is more than is catell,
For frende in courte aie bettir is
'Than peny is in purse certis,
And than is Fortune mishaping,
Whan upon men she is fabling
Thorough misturning of her chaunce,
And castith 'hem out of balaunce.
She maketh through her adversite
Men ful and clerly for to se
Him that is frende in existence
From him that is by apparence,
For infortune makith anone
To know thy frendis fro thy fone
By experience right as it is,
The whiche is more to praise i-wis
Than in muche richesse and tresour,
For more depe profite and valour
Poverte', and suche adversite
Before, than doeth prosperite,
For that one yevith conisaunce,
And t'othir gevith ignoraunce.

And thus in poverte' is in dede
Trouthè declarid fro falſhede,
For faint frendis it wol declare,
And trewe alſo, what way they fare;
For whan he was in his richeſſe
Theſe frendis ful of doubleneſſe
Offirid him in many wiſe
Ther herte and body, and ſervice,
What would he then have you to' have bought
To knowin opinly ther thought,
That he now hath ſo clerely ſene?
The laſſe begiled he ſhould have bene
And he had than percevid it,
But Richeſſe n'olde not let him wit;
Wel more avauntage doeth him than,
Sithe that it maketh him a wiſe man,
The great miſchefe that he perceveth
Than doeth richeſſe, that him deceveth:
Richeſſe riche ne ymakith nought
Him that on treſour ſette his thought,
For richeſſe ſtonte in ſuffiſaunce,
And nothing ſtonte in haboundaunce,
For ſuffiſaunce all onily
Makith menne to live richily.

For he that hath but mitchis tweine,
Ne value in his whole demeine,

Liveth more at ese, and more is riche,
Than doith he whiche that is chiche,
And in his barne hath, soth to saine,
An hundrid mavis of whete graine,
Though he be chapman or marchaunt,
And have of golde many besaunt,
For in the getting he' hath suche wo,
And in the keping drede also,
And sette ere more his besinesse
For to encrese and nat to lesse,
For to augment and multiply;
And though on hepes that lie him by,
Yet nevir shall make his richesse
Asseth unto his gredinesse;
But the pore man that retchith nought
Save of his livelode in his thought,
Whiche that he getteth with his travaile,
He dredith nought that it shall faile,
Though he have little world'is gode,
Metè and drinke, and esie fode,
Upon his travaile and living,
And also suffisaunt clothing,
Or if in sickenesse that he fall,
And lothè mete and drinke withall,
Though he have not his mete to buie,
He shall bethinke him hastily
To put him out of all daungere,
That he of mete hath no mistere,

Or that he maie with little eke
Be foundin while that he is ſeke,
Or that men ſhall him berne in haſte
To live till his ſickeneſſe be paſte
Unto ſome maiſondewe beſide:
He caſte nought what ſhall him betide;
He thinkith nought that evre' he ſhall
Into any ſickeneſſe yfall.

And though it fall, as it maie be,
That all betime ſparin ſhall he
As mokill as ſhall to' him ſuffice
While he is ſicke in any wiſe,
He doith for that he woll be
Contentid with his poverte
Withoutin nede of any man:
So moche in little have he can
He is apaide with his fortune,
And for he n'ill be importune
Unto no wight ne onerous,
Nor of ther godeſſe covetous,
Therefore he ſpareth, it maie well ben,
His pore eſtate for to ſuſtene.

Or if him luſte not for to ſpare,
But ſuffrith forthe as nat yet ware,
At laſte it happeneth, as it maie,
All right unto his laſtè daie,

And take the worlde as it would be;
For evir in herte thinkith he
The sonir that Deth him yslo
To paradise the sonir go
He shall, there for to live in blisse
Where that he shall no godis misse:
Thidir he hopeth God shall him sende
Aftir this wretchid liv'is ende.
Pythagoras himself reherses,
In a boke that The Goldin Verses
Is cleped, for the nobilite
Of the honorable dite,
  Than whan thou goest thy body fro
Fre in the ayre thou shalt up go,
And levin all humanite,
And purely live in diete.
He is a fole withoutin were
That trowith have his countrey here.
  In yerth is not our countere,
That maie these clerkis seine and se
In Boece of Consolacion,
Where it is makid mencion
Of our contre plaine at the eye
By teching of philosophie,
Where leude men mightin lerin wit,
Who so that would translatin it.
If he be suche that can well live
Aftir his rentè maie him yeve,

And not desirith more to have
Than maie fro poverte him save.
A wiseman saied, as we maie sene,
Is no man wretched but he it wene,
Be he a king, knight, or ribaude:
Many' a ribaude is merie' and baude
That swinketh and berith daie and night
Many a burthin of grete might,
The whiche doith him lasse offence
For that he suffrith in pacience:
Thei laugh and daunce, thei trippe and sing,
And laie nought up for ther living,
But in the taverne all dispendeth
The winning whiche that God 'hem sendeth;
Than goeth he fardils for to bere
With as gode chere as he did ere:
To swinke and travaile' he not fainith,
For to robbin he disdainith,
But right anon after his swinke
He goeth to taverne for to drinke.
All these are riche in haboundaunce
That can thus havin suffisaunce
Well more than can an userere,
As God well knowith, without were,
For 'an usurere, so God me se,
Shall nevir for richesse riche be,
But er more pore and indigent,
Scarce, and gredy in his entent.

For ſothe it is, whom it diſpleſe,
There maie no marchaunt live at eſe,
His herte in ſoche a where is ſet
That it quicke brennith for to get,
Ne nevir ſhall though he hath getten,
Though he have golde in garnirs yeten,
For to be nedy he dredeth ſore,
Wherefore to gettin more and more
He ſet his herte and his deſire:
So hote he brennith in the fire
Of covetiſe, that maketh him wode
To purchace othir mennis gode.
He undirfongith a grete pain
That undertaketh to drinke up Sain,
For the more that he drinkith aie
The more he levith, ſothe to ſaie.
Thus is the thruſt of falſe getting,
That laſte evir in coviting,
And the anguiſhe and the diſtreſſe,
With the firè of gredineſſe;
She fightith with him aie and ſtriveth,
So that his herte a ſondir riveth:
Soche gredineſſe him aſſailith
That whan' he moſte hath moſte he failith.
Phiſiciens and advocates
Goin right by the ſamè yates;
Thei ſell ther ſcience for winning,
And haunte ther crafte for grete getting:

Ther winning is of soche sweteneſſe
That if a man fall in ſickeneſſe
Thei are full glad for ther encrece,
For by ther will withoutin leſe
Everiche man ſhouldin be ſeke;
Though thei die thei ſet not a leke;
Aftir whan thei the golde have take
Full little care for 'hem thei make:
Thei would fowertie were ſicke at ones,
Ye, two hundrid, in fleſhe and bones,
And yet two thouſande, as I geſſe,
For to encreſin ther richeſſe.
  Thei woll not worchin in no wiſe
But for lucre and covetiſe,
For phiſicke ginnith firſt by (phi)
The phiſicien alſo ſothly;
And ſithen it goeth fro ſie to ſie
To truſt on 'hem it is folie,
For thei n'ill in no manir gre
Doin right nought for charite.
Eke in the ſamè ſecte are ſet
All tho that prechin for to get
Worſhips, and honour, and richeſſe;
Ther hertis arne in grete diſtreſſe
That folke livin not holily,
But abovin all ſpecially
Soche as yprechin veinglorie,
And towarde God have no mem'orie,

But forthe as ipocritis trace,
And to ther soulis deth purchace,
And outward shewing holinesse,
Though thei be full of cursidnesse:
Nat liche to the apostlis twelve,
Thei deceve othir and 'hem selve:
Begilid is the gilir than
For preching of a cursid man:
Though it to othir maie profite
Himself it availeth not a mite,
For oft gode predicacioun
Cometh of evill entencioun:
To him nat availith his preching,
All helpe he othir with his teching,
For where thei gode example take
There is he with veinglorie shake.
But let us levin these prechours,
And speke of 'hem that in ther tours
Hepe up ther golde and fast yshet,
And sore thereon ther hertis set:
Thei neithir lovin God ne drede;
Thei kepin more than it is nede,
And in ther baggis sore it binde
Out of the sunne and of the winde;
Thei puttin up more than nede ware
Whan thei sene povir folk forfare,
For hungre die, and for cold quake;
God can well vengeaunce thereof take;

The grete mischivis 'hem assaileth,
And thus in gadring aie travaileth;
With mochil pain thei winne richesse,
And drede 'hem holdith in distresse
To kepin that thei gathir fast:
With sorowe thei leve it at last,
With sorowe thei bothe die and live
That unto richesse ther hertes yeve.
And in defaute of love it is,
As it shewith full well iwis,
For if these gredy, sothe to saine,
Lovidin and were loved againe,
And gode love reignid ovir all,
Soche wickidnesse ne should ysall,
But he should yeve that moste gode had
To 'hem that weren in nede bestad,
And live withoutin false usure,
For charite full clene and pure;
If thei 'hem yeve unto godenesse,
Defending 'hem from idilnesse,
In all this worlde than povir none
We shouldin finde I trowe not one.
But chaungid is this worlde unstable,
For love is ovir all vendable:
We se that no man lovith now
But for his winning and for prowe;
And love is thrallid in servage
Whan it is solde for avauntage;

Yet women woll ther bodies sell:
Soche soules goith to the devill of hell.
  Whan Love had tolde 'hem his entent
The baronage to counsaile went.
In many sentencis thei fill,
And diversly thei saied ther will;
But aftir discorde thei accorded,
And ther accorde to Love recorded:
Sir, saidin thei, we ben at one,
By even accorde of everichone,
Out take Richesse all onily,
That swornè hath full hauteinly
That she the castill n'ill assaile,
Ne smite a stroke in this battaile
With darte ne mace, ne spere ne knife,
For man that speketh or berith life,
And blamith your emprise iwis,
And from our hoste departid is,
At lestè waie, as in this plite,
So hath she this man in dispite;
For she saieth he ne loved her never,
And therefore she woll hate him ever;
For he woll gathir no tresore
He hath her wrathe for evirmore;
He' agilte her nere in othir case,
Lo here all wholly his trespase!
She saieth well that this othir daie
He asked her leve to gone the waie

That is clepid to moche yeving,
And ſpake full faire in his praying,
But whan he praied her poore was he,
Therefore ſhe warned him the entre,
Ne yet is he not thrivin ſo
That he hath getten a penie or two
That quietly' is his owne in holde:
Thus hath Richeſſe us all ytolde,
And whan Richeſſe us this recorded
Withoutin her we ben acorded.

And we finde in our accordaunce
That Falſe Semblant and Abſtinaunce,
With all the folke of ther battaile,
Shull at the hindir gate aſſaile
That Wickid Tong hath in keping,
With his Normans full of jangling,
And with 'hem Curteſie and Largeſſe,
That ſhullin ſhewe ther hardineſſe
To the old wife that kept ſo hard
Faire Welcoming within her ward,
Than ſhall Delite and Well-Heling
Yfondin Shame adoun to bring
With all her hoſte erly and late,
Thei ſhull aſſailin that ilke gate;
Ayeniſt Drede ſhall Hardineſſe
Aſſaile and alſo Sikirneſſe,
With all the folke of ther leding,
That nevir wiſte what was ſlaying.

Fraunchiſe ſhall fight and eke Pite
With Daungir full of cruilte.
Thus is your hoſte ordainid wele;
Doune ſhall the caſtill every dele
If evèriche doe his entent,
So that Venus ybe preſent,
Your mothir, full of veſſelage,
That can inough of ſoche uſage;
Withoutin her maie no wight ſpede
This werke neithir for worde ne dede,
Therefore is gode ye for her ſende,
For through her maie this worke amende.

Lordinges, my mothir the goddes,
That is my ladie and maiſtres,
Ne is nat all at my willing,
Ne doeth nat all my deſiring;
Yet can ſhe ſometime doen labour
Whan that her luſte in my ſocour,
As my nede is for to atcheve,
But now I thinke her nat to greve:
My mothir is ſhe', and of childhede
I both worſhip her and eke drede,
For who that dredith ſire ne dame
Shall it abie in bodie' or name:
And nathèleſſe yet connè we
Sende aftir her if nede ybe,

And were ſhe nigh ſhe commin wold;
I trowe that nothing might her hold.
My mothir is of grete proweſſe,
She hath tane many a fortreſſe
That coſt hath many' a pound er this
There I n'as not preſent iwis,
And yet men ſaied it was my dede:
But I come nevir in that ſtede,
Ne me ne liketh, ſo mote I the,
That ſoche tours ben ytake with me;
For why? me thinketh that in no wiſe
It maie be cleped but Marchaundiſe.

Go buie a courſir blacke or white,
And paie therefore, than art thou quite:
The marchaunt owith the right nought
Ne thou him whan thou haſt it bought.
I woll not ſelling clepe Yeving,
For ſelling aſketh no guerdoning;
Here lithe no thanke ne no merite,
That one goth from that othre' all quite;
But this ſelling is not ſemblable;
For whan his horſe is in the ſtable
He maie it ſell again parde,
And winnen on it, ſoche happe maie be,
All maie the manne nat leſe iwis,
For at the leſt the ſkinne is his;

Or ellis, if it ſo betide
That he woll kepe his horſe to ride,
Yet is he lorde aie of his horſe;
But thilkè chafare is well worſe
There Venus entremetith ought,
For who ſo ſoche chaffare hath bought
He ſhall not worchin ſo wiſely
That he ne ſhall leſe uttirly
Bothe his money and his chaffare;
But the ſellir of thilkè ware
The priſe and profite havin ſhall;
Certaine the buier ſhall leſe all,
For he ne can ſo dere it buie
To have lordſhip and full maiſtrie,
Ne havin power to make letting
Neither for yefte ne for preching,
That of his chaffare maugre his
An other ſhall have as moche iwis,
If he woll yeve as moche as he,
Of what countrey ſo that he be,
Or for right nought, ſo happe ymaie,
If he can flattir her to' her paie.
And ben than ſoche marchauntis wiſe?
No, but folis in every wiſe:
Whan thei buie ſoche thing wilfully
There thei leſe ther gode folily;
But nathèleſſe this dare I ſaie,
My mothir is not wont to paie,

For ſhe' is neithir ſo fole ne nice
To entremete her of ſoche vice;
But truſtith well he ſhall paie all
That repente of his bargaine ſhall,
Whan Poverte' put him in diſtreſſe,
All were he ſcholir to Richeſſe,
That is for me in grete yerning
Whan ſhe aſſenteth to my willing.

But by my mothir Sainct Venus,
And by her fathir Saturnus,
That her engendrid by his life,
But nat upon his weddid wife,
Yet woll I more unto you ſwere,
To makin this thing the ſurere.
Now by that faithe and that beaute
That I owe to' all my brethrin fre,
Of whiche there n'is wight undir heven
That can ther fadir's namis neven,
So divers and many there be
That with my mothre' have be prive,
Yet woll I ſwere for ſikirneſſe
The pole of helle to my witneſſe,
Now drinke I not this yere clarre
If that I lie or forſworne be,
For of the goddes the uſage is
That who ſo him forſwereth amis

Shall that yere drinkin no clarre.
Now have I ſworne inough parde;
If I forſwere than am I lorne;
But I woll nevir be forſworne,
Sithe Richeſſe hath me failid here
She ſhall abie that treſpas dere
At leſtè waie but I her harme
With ſwerde, or ſparth, or with giſarme.
For certis ſithe ſhe loveth not me,
Fro thilkè time that ſhe maię ſe
The caſtill and the toure to ſhake,
In ſorie time ſhe ſhall awake;
If I maie gripe a richè man
I ſhall ſo pulle him if I can
That he ſhall in a few ſtoundis
Leſe all his markes and his poundis.
I ſhall him make his pens out fling
But that thei in his garnir ſpring;
Our maidins ſhall eke plucke him ſo
That him ſhall nedin fethirs mo,
And make him ſell his londe to ſpende
But he the bet conne him defende.

Pore men han made ther lorde of me;
Although thei nat ſo mightie be
That thei maie fede me in delite
I woll not have 'hem in diſpite:

No gode man hateth 'hem as I gesse,
For chinche and feloun is Richesse,
That so can chase 'hem and dispise,
And 'hem defoule in sondrie wise:
Thei loven full bette, so God me spede,
Than doith the riche chinchy grede,
And ben (in gode faith) more stable,
And truir and more serviable,
And therefore it suffisith me
Ther gode hertis and ther beaute:
Thei han on me set all ther thought,
And therefore I foryete 'hem nought.
  I woll 'hem bring in grete noblesse,
If that I were god of Richesse,
As I am god of Love sothely,
Soche ruthe upon ther plaint have I;
Therefore I must his succour be
That painith him to servin me,
For if he deied for love of this
Than semeth in me no love there is.
  Sir, saied thei, sothe is every dele
That ye reherce, and we wote wele
Thilke othe to holde is resonable,
For it is gode and covenable
That ye on riche men han ysworne;
For, Sir, this wote we well beforne,
If riche men doin you homage
That is as folis doen outrage;

But ye ſhull not forſworne ybe,
Ne let therefore to drinke clarrie,
Or piment makid freſhe and newe;
Ladies ſhull 'hem ſoche pepir brewe
If that thei fall into ther laas
That thei for wo mowe ſaine Alas!
Ladies ſhullen ere ſo curteis be
That thei ſhall quitè your othe all fre;
Ne ſeketh nevir othir vicaire,
For thei ſhall ſpeke with 'hem ſo faire
That ye ſhall holde you paied full wele,
Though ye you medle nere a dele.
Let ladies worchin with ther thinges,
Thei ſhall 'hem tell ſo fele tidinges,
And move ſo many requeſtis,
By flatterie, that not honeſt is,
And thereto yeve 'hem ſoche thankinges,
What with kiſſing and with talkinges,
That certis if thei trowid be
Shall nevir leve 'hem londe ne ſe
That it n'ill as the moeble fare,
Of whiche thei firſt delivered are.
Now maie you tell us all your will,
And we your heſtis ſhall fulfill.

But Falſe Semblant dare not for drede
Of you, Sir, medle him of this dede,

For he ſaith that ye ben his fo,
He n'ot if ye woll worche him wo;
Wherefore we praie you all, beau Sire,
That ye foryeve him now your ire,
And that he maie dwell as your man
With Abſtinence his dere lemman:
This our accorde and our will now.
  Parfei, ſaied Love, I graunt it you
I woll well holde him for my man;
Now let him come: and he forthe ran.
  Falſe Semblant, (quod Love) in this wiſe
I take the here to my ſervice,
That thou our frendis helpe alwaie,
And hindre 'hem neithir night ne daie,
But doe thy might 'hem to releve,
And eke our en'emies that thou greve:
Thine be this might; I graunt it the;
My king of Harlotes ſhalt thou be:
We woll that thou have ſoche honour:
Certain thou art a falſe traitour,
And eke a thief; ſithe thou were borne
A thouſande times thou art forſworne:
But nathèleſſe in our hering,
To put our folke out of doubting,
I bidde the teche 'hem, woſt thou how?
By ſome genèrall ſignè now,
In what place thou ſhalt foundin be
If that men had miſtir of the,

And how men ſhall the beſt eſpie,
For the to knowe is grete maiſtrie:
Tell in what place is thine haunting.
Sir, I have fully divers wonning
That I kepe not reherſid be,
So that ye would reſpitin me,
For if that I tell you the ſothe
I maie have harme and ſhamè bothe:
If that my felowes wiſtin it
My talis ſhouldin me be quit,
For certaine thei would hatè me
If er I knewe ther cruelte,
For thei would ore all hold 'hem ſtill
Of trothe that is again ther will:
Soche talis kepin thei not here;
I might eſtſone buie it full dere
If I ſaied of 'hem any thing
That diſpleſith to ther hering,
For what worde that 'hem pricketh or biteth
In that worde none of 'hem deliteth,
All were it goſpell the' Evangile,
That would reprove 'hem of ther gile,
For thei are cruill and hautain;
And this thing wote I well certain,
If I ſpeke ought to paire or loos
Your courte ſhall not ſo well be cloos
That thei ne ſhall wite it at laſt:
Of gode men am I nought agaſt,

For thei woll taken on 'hem nothing
Whan that thei knowe all my mening,
But he that woll it on him take
He woll himſelf ſuſpecious make
That he his life let covirtly
In Gile and in Ypocriſie,
That me' engendrid and yave foſtring.
  Thei made a full gode engendring,
(Quod Love) for who ſo ſothly tell
Thei engendrid the divell of hell.
  But nedely, howſoere it be,
(Quod Love) I will and chargè the
To tell anon thy wonning placis
Hering eche wight that in this place is,
And what life thou liviſt alſo,
Hide it no lengir now; whereto?
Thou muſt diſcovre' all thy worching,
How thou ſerviſt, and of what thing,
Though that thou ſhouldeſt for thy ſoth-ſaw
Ben all to-betin and to-drawe,
And yet art thou not wont parde;
But natheleſſe though thou betin be
Thou ſhalt not be the firſt that ſo
Hath for ſothſawe yſuffrid wo.
  Sir, ſithe that it maie likin you,
Though that I ſhould be ſlain right now,
I ſhall doen your commaundèment,
For thereto have I grete talent.

Withoutin wordis mo right than
Falſe Semblant his ſermon began,
And ſaied 'hem thus in audience:
Barons, take hede of my ſentence.
That wight that liſt to have knowing
Of Falſe Semblant, full of flatt'ring,
He muſt in worldly folke him ſeke,
And certis in the cloiſtirs eke;
I won no where but in 'hem twaie,
But not like evin, ſothe to ſaie:
Shortly, I woll herberowe me
There I hope beſt to hulſtrid be;
And certainly ſikereſt hiding
Is undirneth humbliſt clothing.
Religious folke ben full covert,
Seculer folke ben more appert;
But nathèleſſe I woll not blame
Religious folke, ne 'hem diffame,
In what habite that er thei go;
Religion humble' and true alſo
Woll I not blamin ne diſpiſe,
But I n'ill love it in no wiſe;
I mene of falſe religious,
That ſtout ben and malicious,
That wollin in an habite go
And ſettin not ther herte therto.

Religious folke ben all pitous,
Thou ſhalt not ſene one diſpitous;

Thei lovin no pride ne no ſtrife,
But humbly thei woll lede ther life,
With whiche folke woll I nevir be,
And if I dwell I fainè me
I maie well in ther habite go;
But me were lever my necke a two
Than let a purpoſe that I take,
What covènaunt that er I make.
I dwell with 'hem that proude ybe,
And full of wiles and ſubtilte,
That worſhip of this worlde coveiten,
And gretè nede connin expleiten,
And gon and gadrin grete pitaunces,
And purchaſe 'hem the acqueintaunces
Of men that mightie life maie leden,
And faine 'hem pore, and 'hem ſelf feden
With gode morcils delicious,
And drinkin gode wine precious,
And preche us povert and diſtreſſe,
And fiſhin 'hem ſelf grete richeſſe
With wily nettis that thei caſt:
It woll come foule out at the laſt.
Thei ben fro clene religion went;
Thei make the worlde an argument
That hath a foule concluſion:
I have a robe of religion,
Than am I all religious:
This argument is all roignous;

It is not worth a crokid brere:
Habite ne makith monke ne frere,
But clene life and devocion
Makith gode men of religion.
 Nathèlesse there can none answere,
How high that er his hedde he shere
With rasour whettid nere so kene,
That gile in braunchis cutte thurtene,
There can no wight distinct it so
That he dare saie a word thereto.
 But what herb'row that ere I take,
Or what semblaunt that er I make,
I mene but gile, and folowe that,
For right no more than Gibbe our cat
(That awaiteth mice and rattes to killen)
Ne entende I but to begilen:
Ne no wight maie by my clothing
Wete with what folke is my dwelling,
Ne by my wordis yet parde,
So soft and so plesaunt thei be.
 Beholde the dedis that I doe,
But thou be blinde thou oughtist so,
For varie ther wordes fro ther dede
Thei thinke on gile withoutin drede,
What manir clothing that thei were,
Or what estate that er thei bere,
Lerid or leude, lorde or ladie,
Knight, squier, burgeis, or bailie.

Right thus while False Semblant ſermoneth
Eſt ſonis Love him areſoneth,
And brake his tale in his ſpeking
As though he had him tolde leſing,
And ſaid, What devill is that I here?
What folke haſt thou us nempnid here?
Maie men findin religioun
In worldly habitacioun?
Ye, Sir, it foloweth nat that thei
Should lede a wickid life parſei,
Ne not therefore ther ſoulis leſe
That 'hem to worldly clothis cheſe,
For certis it were grete pite;
Men maie in ſeculer clothes ſe
Floriſhin holy religioun
Full many' a ſainct in felde and toun,
With many' a virgine glorious,
Devoute and full religious,
Han died that commin clothe aie beren,
Yet ſainctis nertheleſſe thei weren:
I could reckin you many a ten,
Ye, welnigh all theſe holy women
That men in churchis herry' and ſeke,
Bothe maidins and theſe wivis eke,
That bare ful many' a faire childe here,
Werid alway clothis ſeculere,
And in the ſame clothes didin they
That ſaintis weren and ben alway.

The ix thousande maidinis dere,
That beren in heven ther ciergis clere,
Of whiche men rede in churche and sing,
Were take in seculer clothing,
Whan thei recevid martirdome,
And wonnin heven unto ther home.
Gode hert ymakith the gode thought,
The clothing yeveth ne revith nought:
The gode thought and the gode worching
That maketh the religion flouring;
There lieth the gode religioun
Aftir the righte entencioun.

Who so ytoke a wethir's skinne,
And wrapped a gredy woulfe therinne,
For he should go with lambis white,
Wenist thou not he would 'hem bite?
Yes; nertheless as he were wode
He would 'hem wirry', and drinke the blode,
And wel the rathir 'hem disceve,
For sithin thei coude nat perceve
His tregette and his cruilte
Thei would him folow tho he flie.

If there be wolvis of suche hewe
Amongis these apostlis newe,
Thou, holy churche, thou maiste be wailed;
Sithe that thy cite is assailed

Through knightis of thine ownè table
God wot thy lordship is doutable:
If thei enforcin it to win
That should defend it fro within
Who might defence ayenst 'hem make?
Withoutin stroke it mote be take
Of trepeget or mangonell,
Without displaying of pensell;
And if God n'il done it socour,
But let rennin in this colour,
Thou must thy hestis lettin be;
Than is there nought but yeldè the,
Or yeve 'hem tribute doutiless,
And holde it of 'hem to have pees:
But gretir harme betidith the
That thei all maistir of it be:
Wel con thei scornin the withall,
By day ystuffin thei the wall,
And al the night thei minin there:
Nay, thou plantin must ellis where
Thine impis if thou wolt frute have;
Abide not there thy selfe to save.

But now pece; here I turne againe;
I wol no more of this thing faine,
Yf I may passin me hereby,
For I might makin you wery;

But I wol hetin you alway
To helpe your frendis what I may,
So thei wollin my company,
For thei be ſhent all uttirly;
But if ſo fallin that I be
Oftin with 'hem and thei with me,
And eke my lemman mote thei ſerve,
Or thei ſhul not my love deſerve.
Forſoth I am a falſe traitour;
God judged me for a theſe trechour:
Forſworne I am, but wel nigh none
Wote of my gile til it be done.
Through me hath many' one deth receved
That my treget ner aperceved,
And yet receveth, and ſhal receve,
That my falſneſſe ſhal nere perceve,
But who ſo doth, if he wiſe be,
Him is right gode beware of me;
But ſo ſlighe is the perceving
That al to late comith knowing,
For Proteus, that coude him chaunge
In every ſhappe homely and ſtraunge,
Coude nevir ſuche gile ne treſoune
As I, for I come nere in toune
There as I might yknowin be
Though men me both might here and ſee:
Ful wel I can my clothis chaunge,
Take one and make an othir ſtraunge;

Now am I knight, now chaſtèlaine,
Now prelate, and nowe chapèlaine,
Now prieſt, now clerke, and now foſtere,
Now am I maiſtir, now ſcholere,
Now monke, now chanon, now baily:
Whatevir miſtir manne am I.
  Now am I prince, now am I page,
And can by hert ev'ry langage;
Somtimis am I hore and olde,
Now I am yong, and ſtout, and bolde,
Now am I Robert, now Robin,
Now Frere Minor, now Jacobin:
And with me foloweth my loteby
To done me ſolace and comp'any,
That hight Dame Abſtinence, and raigned
In many a queint arraie fained;
Right as it commeth to her liking
I fulfill all her deſiring.
  Somtime a woman's clothe take I,
Now am I a maide, now lady:
  Somtime I am religious,
Now like an ankir in an hous:
  Somtime am I a prioreſſe,
And now a nonne, and now abbeſſe,
And go thorough all regiounes
Yſeking all religiounes.
  But to what ordir that I'am ſworne
I take the ſtrawe and bete the corne:

To jolie folke I enhabite
I aſke no more but ther habite.
  What wol ye more? in every wiſe
Right as me liſt I me diſgiſe.
  Wel can I bere me undir wede,
Unlike is my worde to my dede.
Thus make I into my trappes fall
The folke through my priv'ilegis all
That ben in Chriſtendome a live.
  I may aſſoile and I may ſhrive,
That no prelate may lettin me,
All folke where evir thei found be:
I n'ot no prelate maie done ſo
But it the Pope be, and no mo,
That madin thilke eſtabliſhing:
Now is not this a propre thing?
But were my ſleightis aperceved

. . . .

As I was wont, and woſt thou why?
For I did 'hem a tregetry;
But therof yeve I' a litil tale,
I have the ſilvir and the male.
So have I prechid and eke ſhriven,
So have I take, ſo have I yeven,
Through ther foly huſbonde and wife,
That I lede right a joly life:
Through ſimpleſſe of the prelacie
Thei know not all my tregettrie.

But for as moche as man and wife
Shuld ſhew ther pariſh prieſt ther life
Onis a yere, as ſaith the boke,
Er any wight his houſil toke,
Than have I privilegis large
That maie of mochil thing diſcharge,
For he may ſay right thus parde:
  Sir Prieſt, in ſhrift I tel it the
That he to whom that I am ſhriven
Hath me aſſoilid, and me yeven
Penaunce ſothly for alle my ſin
Whiche that I founde me giltie in;
Ne I ne' have nevir entencion
To make double confeſſion,
Ne reherce efte my ſhrift to the;
O ſhrifte is right inough to me;
This ought the to ſuffiſin wele,
Ne be not rebell nere a dele,
For certis though thou haddeſt it ſworne
I wote no prieſt ne prelate borne
That maie to ſhrift eft me conſtraine,
And if thei done I wol me plaine,
For I wote where to plainin wele:
Thou ſhalt not ſtreinin me a dele,
Ne enforce me ne not me trouble
To makin my confeſſion double:

Ne I have none affection
To' have double abſolucion;
The firſt is right inough to me;
This lattre' aſſoiling quite I the:
I am unbounde; what maiſt thou finde
More of my ſinnes me to unbinde,
For he that might hath in his honde
Of all my ſinnis me unbounde?
And if thou wolt me thus conſtraine,
That me mote nedis on the plaine,
There ſhall no juge imperiall,
Ne biſhop ne officiall,
Done jugèment on me, for I
Shal gone and plaine me opinly
Anon to my ſhriftfathir newe,
Whiche that hight Frerè Wolfe untrewe,
And he ſhal chuſin him for me,
For I trowe he can hampir the;
But Lord! he would be wrothe withall
Yf men would him Frere Wolfe ycall,
For he would have no pacience,
But done all cruill vengience;
He would his might done at the left,
Than nothing ſpare for Godd'is heſt:
And God ſo wiſe be my ſocour
But thou yeve me my Saviour
At Eſtir, whan it likith me,
Withoutin preſing more on the,

I wol forth and to him ygone,
And he ſhal houſil me anone,
For I am out of thy grutching;
I kepe not dele with the nothing.
  Thus may he ſhrive him that forſaketh
His pariſh prieſt and to me taketh,
And if the prieſt wol him refuſe
I am full redy him to' accuſe,
And him puniſh and hampir ſo
That he his churchè ſhal forgo.
  But who ſo hath in his feling
The conſequence of ſuche ſhriving
Shal ſene that prieſt maie nere have might
To know the conſcience aright
Of him that is undir his cure;
And this is ayenſt holy' ſcripture,
That biddith every herde honeſt
Have very knowing of his beſt;
But povir folke, that gon by ſtrete,
That have no golde ne ſummis grete,
Them would I let to ther prelates,
Or let ther prieſtis know ther ſtates,
For to me right nought yevin thei,
And why it is, for thei ne may.
  Thei ben ſo bare I take no kepe,
But I woll havin the fat ſhepe;
Let pariſh prieſtis have the lene;
I yeve not of ther harme a bene:

And if that prelatis grutche it,
That oughtin wroth be in ther wit
To leſin ther fat beſtis ſo,
I ſhal yeve 'hem a ſtroke or two,
So that thei ſhal leſin with force
Ye, both ther mitre and ther croce.
  Thus jape I 'hem, and have do longe,
My privilegis ben ſo ſtrong.
  Falſe Semblant would have ſtintid here,
But Love ne made him no ſuche chere
That he was wery of his ſawe,
But for to make him glad and fawe
He ſaid, Tell on more ſpecially
How that thou ſerviſt untruly:
  Tel forth, and ſhame the nere a dele,
For as thine habit ſhewith wele
Thou ſerveſt an holy herèmite.
  Sothe is but I' am but an ipocrite.
Thou goeſt and prechiſt poverte.
  Ye, Sir, but Richeſſe hath poſtè.
Thou prechiſt abſtinence alſo.
  Sir, I woll fillen, ſo mote I go,
My paunche of gode mete and gode wine,
As ſhould a maiſtir of divine,
For how that I me povir faine
Yet al povir folke I diſdaine.

I love bettir the acqueintaunce
Ten timis of the King of Fraunce
Than of a pore man of milde mode
Though that his ſoule be all ſo gode,
For whan I ſe beggirs quaking,
Nakid on mixins all ſtinking,
For hungre crie and eke for care,
I entremet not of ther fare;
Thei ben ſo pore and ful of pine
Thei might not ones yeve me a dine,
For thei have nothing but ther life;
What ſhould he yeve that licketh his knife?
It is but foly to' entremete
To ſeke in hound'is neſt fat mete:
Let bere him to the ſpittle' anone,
But for me comfort get thei none:
But a full riche ſicke uſurere
Would I viſitin and drawe nere;
Him would I comforte and rehete,
For I hope of his golde to gete,
And if that wickid Deth him have
I woll go with him in his grave:
And if there any reprove me
Why that I let the povir be,
Woſt thou how I know how to' aſcape?
I ſay and ſwerin him full rape

That richè men han more tetchis
Of ſinne than han theſe pore wretchis,
And han of counſaile more miſtere,
And therfore I would drawe 'hem nere:
But as gret hurt, it maie ſo be,
Hath ſoule in right grete poverte
As ſoule in grete richeſſe forſothe,
Al be it that thei hurtin bothe,
For richeſſe and mendicitees
Bene clepid two extremitees,
The mene is clepid Suffiſaunce,
There lieth of vertue the' aboundaunce.
  For Salomon, full wel I wote,
In his wiſe Parablis us wrote,
As it is knowen of many' a wight,
In his thirtieth chapitir right,
God thou me kepe for thy poſtè
Fro richeſſe and mendicite,
For if a richè man him dreſſe
To thinkin to moche on richeſſe
His hert on that ſo ferre is ſette
That he' his Creatour doth foryette,
And him that beggith woll aie greve;
How ſhould I by his worde him leve,
Unneth that he n'is a micher
Forſworne, or els Godd'is lier?
Thus ſayith Salomon'is ſawes.
  Ne we find writtin in no lawes,

And namely in our Chriſtin laie,
Who ſo ſaith ye I dare ſay naie,
That Chriſt ne his apoſtils dere,
While that thei walkid in erth here,
Were nevir ſene herbrid begging,
For they n'olde beggin for nothing.
And right thus were men wont to teche,
And in this wiſe wouldin it preche
The maiſtirs of divinite
Somtime in Paris the cite.

And if men would there gaine appoſe
The nakid texte and let the gloſe,
It mightin ſone aſſoilid be,
For men may wel the ſothe yſe
That pardie thei might aſke a thing
Plainly forth withoutin begging,
For they weren Godd'is herdis dere,
And cure of ſoulis haddin here,
Thei ne wolde nothing begge ther fode,
For aftir Chriſt was done on rode
With ther propir hondis thei wrought,
And with traveile, and ellis nought,
Thei wonnin al ther ſuſtinaunce,
And lividin forth in ther penaunce,
And the remènaunt yaf awaie
To othir pore folkis alwaie.

Thei neithir bildin toure ne hall,
But thei in housis smal with alle.
A mighty man, that can and maie,
Should with his honde and body' alwaie
Winne him his fode in labouring,
Yf he ne' have rent or suche a thing:
Although he be religious,
And God to servin curious,
Thus mote he done or do trespas,
But if it be in certaine caas,
That I can telle if mistir be
Right wel whan that the time I se.
Seke the boke of Sainćte Augustine,
Be it in papir or perchemene,
There as he writte of these worchinges,
Thou shalt sene that none excusinges
A perfite man ne should yseke
By wordis ne by dedis eke,
Although he be religious
And God to servin curious,
That he ne shal, so mote I go,
With propir hondes and body' also
Yget his fode in laboring,
Yf he ne' have properte of thing,
Yet should he sel all his substaunce,
And with his swinke have sustinaunce,
If he be parfite in bounte;
Thus han the bokis toldè me:

For he that wol gone idilly,
And usith it aie besily
To hauntin othir menn'is table,
He is a trechour full of fable,
Ne he ne maie by gode reson
Excuse him by his orison,
For men behovith in some gise
Ben somtime out of God's servise,
To gon and purchasin ther nede.
Men mote etin, that is no drede,
And slepe, and eke do othir thing,
And so long may thei leve praying.
So may they eke ther praiere blinne
While that thei werke ther mete to winne;
Seint Austin wol therto accorde
In thilkè boke that I recorde.
Justinian eke, that made lawes,
Hath thus forbodin by olde sawes.
No man, up paine for to be ded,
Mighty' of body, to begge his bred
Yf he may swinke it for to gete;
Men should him rathir maime or bete,
Or done of him aperte justice,
Than suffrin him in suche malice.
Thei done not wel, so mote I go,
Whiche that takin suche almesse so,
But if thei have some privilege
That of the paine 'hem woll alege.

But how that is can I not se
But if the prince discevid be;
Ne I ne wene not sikirly
That thei maie have it rightfully.
But yet I wol not determine
Of princis powir ne define,
Ne by my worde compre'hende iwis,
Yf it so ferre may stretche in this;
I wol not entremete a dele
But I trowe that the boke saith wele,
Who that taketh almessis that be
Dewe to folke that men may yse
Lame and feble, wery and bare,
Povir, or in suche manir care,
That con winnin 'hem nevir mo,
For thei havin no power therto,
He etith his ownè dampning,
But if he lie that made al thing;
And if ye suche a truaunt finde
Chastise him wel if ye be kinde;
But thei would hatin you parcaas
If that ye fillin in ther laas.
Thei would eftsonis do you scathe,
If that thei mightin, late or rathe,
For thei be not ful pacient
That han the worlde thus foule yblent:
And wetith wel that God ybad
The gode man sell al that he had

And folowe' him, and to pore it yeve;
He would not therfore that he live
To servin him in mendience,
For it was nevir his sentence,
But he bad werke whan that nede is,
And folowe him in gode dedis.
Saint Poule, that loved al holy church,
He bade the' apostils for to wurch,
And winne ther livelode in that wise,
And 'hem defendid truandise,
And sayid, Werkith with your honden:
Thus should the thing be understonden.
He n'olde iwis have bid 'hem begging,
Ne sellin gospell ne preching,
Lest thei berafte with ther asking
Folke of ther cattle' or of ther thing.
For in this world is many' a man
That yeveth his gode, for he ne can
Werne it for shame, or ellis he
Would of the' askir delivered be,
And for he him encombrith so
He yeveth him gode to let him go:
But it can him nothing profite;
Thei lese the yefte and the merite.
The gode folke that St. Poule to preched
Profrid him ofte, whan he 'hem teched,
Some of ther gode in charite,
But therof right nothing toke he,

But of his hondis would he gette
Clothis to wrine him, and his mete.

Tel me than how a man may liven
That al his gode to pore hath yeven,
And wol but onely bidde his bedes,
And ner with hondes labour his nedes.
May he do ſo? Ye, Sir. And howe?
Sir, I woll gladly tellin you.
Saint Auſtin ſaith, A man may be
In houſis that han properte,
As Templers and Hoſpitèlers,
And as theſe Chanons Regulers,
Or theſe White Monkis, or theſe Blake,
I wol no mo enſamplis make,
And take thereof his ſuſteining,
For therin lyith no begging,
But othirwayis not iwis,
Yet Auſtin gabbith not of this;
And yet ful many' a monke laboureth
That God in holy churche honoureth,
For whan ther ſwinking is agon
Thei rede and ſing in church anone.
And for there hath ben grete diſcorde
As many' a wight may bere recorde,
Upon the' eſtate of mendicience,
I wol ſhortely in your preſence

Tel how a man maie begge at nede,
That hath not wherwith him to fede,
Maugre his felowis janglinges,
For sothfastnes wol none hidinges,
And yet percase I may obey,
That I to you sothly thus sey.

Lo, here the case especiall:
If a man be so bestiall
That he of no crafte hath science,
And nought desirith ignorence,
Than may he go a begging yerne
Till he some othir crafte can lerne,
Through whiche withoutin truanding
He may in trouthe have his living:
Or if he may done no labour
For elde, or sickenesse, or langour,
Or for his tendir age also,
Than may he yet a begging go:
Or if he have peravinture
Through usage of his noriture
Livid ovir deliciously,
Than oughtin gode folke cominly
Han of his mischefe some pite,
And suffrin him also that he
May gon about and begge his bred
That he be not for hongir ded:

Or if he have of çrafte conning,
And ſtrength alſo and deſiring
For to worchin, as he had what,
But he finde neithir this ne that,
Than may he beggin till that he
Have gettin his neceſſite:
Or if his winning be ſo lite
That his labour will not aquite
Sufficiauntly al his living
Yet may he go his brede begging,
Fro dore to dore he may go trace
Till he the remnaunt may purchaſe:
Or if a man would undirtake
Any empriſe for to ymake
In the reſcous of our lay,
And it defendin as he may,
Be it with armis or lettrure,
Or othir convenable cure,
If it be ſo that he pore be
Than may he beggin til that he
Maie findin in trouth for to ſwinke,
And get him clothis, mete, and drinke,
Swinke he with his hondes corporel,
And not with hondes eſpirituel.

In all this caſe, and in ſemblables,
If that there ben mo reſonables,

He maie begge as I tell you here,
And ellis not in no manere,
As William Saint Amour would preche,
And oftin would dispute and teche
Of this matir all opinly
At Paris fully' and solemply;
And all so God my soulè blesse.
As he had in this stedfastnesse
The' acorde of the' Universite,
And of the peple', as semith me.
No gode man ought it to refuse,
Ne ought him thereof to excuse,
Be wrothe or blithe, who so thou be,
For I wol speke and tell it the
Al should I die and be put doun,
As was Saint Poule, in derke prisoun,
Or be exilid in this caas
With wrong, as Maistir William was,
That my mothir Hypocrisie
Banished for her gret envie.
My mothir flemed him Saint Amour:
This noble man did suche labour
To susteine er the loialte,
That he to muche agiltè me:
He made a boke and let it write,
Wherin his life he did all dite,
And would that eche renied begging,
And livin by my traveiling,

If I ne' had rent ne othir gode;
What! wenith he that I were wode?
For labour might me nevir plese,
I have more will to ben at ese,
And have well levir, sothe to saie,
Before the peple pattre' and praie,
And wrie me in my foxerie
Undir a cope of papelardie.
(Quod Love) What divel is this I here?
What wordis tellist thou me here?
What, Sir? Why Falsenesse that apert is.
Than dredist thou not God? No, certis;
For selde in grete thing shal he spede
In this world that God wol ydrede,
For folke that 'hem to vertue yeven,
And truily on ther owne liven,
And 'hem in godenesse aie contente,
On 'hem is litil thrifte isente:
Suche folke ydrinkin grete misese;
That life ne may me nevir plese.
But se what golde han userers,
And silvir eke, in ther garners!
Tailagiers, and these moniours,
Bailiffes, bedils, provostes, countours,
These livin well nigh by ravine:
The smale peple 'hem mote encline,
And thei as wolvis wol 'hem eten;
Upon the povir folke thei geten

Ful muche of that thei ſpende or kepe;
N'is none of 'hem that thei n'il ſtrepe,
And wrine 'hem ſelvin well at full;
Withoutin ſcalding thei 'hem pull:
The ſtrong the feble ovirgothe,
But I that were my ſimple clothe
Robbe bothe the robbid and robbours,
And gile the gilid and gilours;
By my treget I gathre' and threſte
The grete treſour into my cheſte,
That lieth with me ſo faſte ybounde;
Thus myn high paleis do I founde,
And my delitis I fulfill
With wine at feſtis at my will,
And tablis ful of entremees:
I wol no liſe but eſe and pees,
And winnin golde to ſpende alſo,
For whan the grete bagge is ago
It comith full right with my japes,
Make I not wel tomble mine apes?
To winnen is alwaie mine entent;
My purchace' is bettir than my rent;
For though that I ſhould betin be
Ovir al I entremet me:
Withoutin me maie no wight dure;
I walkin ſoulis for to cure:
Of all the world the cure have I
In brede and eke in length; boldly

I wol bothe preche and eke counſailen:
With hondis wol I not travailen,
For of the Pope I have the bull;
I ne holde not my wittis dull:
I wol not ſtintin in my live
Theſe emperouris for to ſhrive,
Or kingis, dukes, and lordis grete,
But povir folke al quite I lete:
I love no ſuche ſhriving parde
But it for othir cauſe ybe:
I recke not of theſe povir men;
Ther eſtate is not worthe an hen.
   Wher findeſt thou 'a ſwinkir of labour
Have me to be his confeſſoure?
But empreſſis and ducheſſis,
Theſe quenis and eke counteſſis,
Theſe abbeſſis and eke bigins,
And theſe grete ladies palaſins,
Theſe joly knightis and bailives,
Theſe nonnis and theſe burgeis wives,
That riche yben and eke pleſing,
And theſe maidinis welfaring,
Where ſo thei clad or nakid be,
Uncounſailed goeth there none fro me;
And for ther ſoulis ſavite
At lorde and lady', and ther meine,
I aſke, whan thei 'hem to me ſhrive,
The propertie of al ther live,

And make 'hem trowe, both moste and lest,
Ther parish priest is but a best
Ayens me and my company,
That shrewis ben as gret as I,
Fro whiche I wol not hide in holde
No privite that me is tolde,
That I by worde or signe iwis
Ne wol make 'hem know what it is,
And thei wollen also tellin me
Thei hele fro me no privite;
And for to make you them perceiven
That usin folke thus to deceiven,
I wol you saine withoutin drede
What men maie in the Gospell rede
Of Sainct Mathewe the gospellere,
That saieth as I shall you saie here.

Upon the chairè of Moses
Thus it is glosid doutilesse,
(That is, The Oldè Testament,
For thereby is the chairè ment)
Sittin Scribis and Pharisen,
That is to saine, the cursid men,
Whiche that we Ipocritis call;
Doeth that thei preche I rede you all;
But doeth not as thei doen a dele
That ben not werie to saie wele,

But to doe well no will have thei,
And thei would binde on folke alwaie,
That ben to be begilid able,
Burdons that ben importable;
On folkis ſhouldirs thinges thei couchen,
That thei n'ill with ther fingirs touchen;
And why woll thei not touch it? why!
For them ne liſte nat ſikirly,
For the ſadde burdons that men taken
Ymakin folkis ſhouldirs aken.
And if thei doe ought that gode be
That is for folke it ſhouldin ſe;
Ther burdons largir makin thei,
And makin ther hemmes wide alwaie,
And lovin ſetis at the table
The firſt and the moſte honourable;
And for to han the firſt chairis
In ſinagogges to'hem full dere is,
And willen that folke 'hem loute and grete
Whan that thei paſſin through the ſtrete,
And wollen be cleped Maiſtir alſo;
But thei ne ſhould not willin ſo,
The Goſpell' is there ayenſt I geſſe,
That ſhewith well ther wickidneſſe.

An othir cuſtome uſin we;
Of 'hem that woll ayenſt us be
We hate him dedly everychone,
And we woll werrey him as one:

Him that one hatith hate we all,
And conjecte how to doen him fall;
And if we sene him winne honour,
Richesse or preise, through his valour,
Provende or rent, or dignite,
Full faste iwis compassin we
By what laddre' he is clombin so;
And for to make him doune to go
With traison we woll him defame,
And doen him lesin his gode name.
  Thus from his laddir we him take,
And thus his frendis foes we make,
But worde ne wetin shall he none
Till al his frendis ben his fone;
For if we did it opinly
We mightin have blame redily,
For had he wiste of our malice
He had him kept but he were nice.
  An othir' is this, that if so fall
That there be one emong us all
That doeth a gode tourne, out of drede
We saine it is our aldir dede,
Ye, sikirly though he it fained,
Or that him liste or that him dained
A man through him avauncid be,
Thereof all partineres be we,
And tellin folke where so we go
That man through us is sprongin so.

And for to have of men praising
We purchace through our flattering
Of richè men of grete poste
Lettirs to witnesse our bounte,
So that man weneth that maie us se
That allè vertue in us be.
And alwaie povir we us fain,
But how so that we begge or plain
We ben the folke without lesing,
That all thing have without having.
Thus be dradde of the peple' iwis,
And gladly my purpose is this:
I delin with no wight but he
Have golde and tresour grete plente;
Ther acquaintaunce well lovin I:
This moche is my desire shortly;
I entremete me of brocages,
I makin pece and mariages,
I am gladly executour,
And many times a procuratour,
I am sometime a messagere,
That fallith not to my mistere.
And many timis I make enquest,
For me that office is nat honest;
To dele with othir mennis thing
That is to me a grete liking;
And if that ye have ought to doe
In place that I repairin to

I ſhall it ſpedin through my witte
As ſone as ye have told me it:
So that ye ſervin me to paie
My ſervice ſhall be yours alwaie.
But who ſo woll chaſtiſè me
Anone my love yloſte hath he,
For I love no man in no giſe
That woll me reprove or chaſtiſe,
But I woll all folke undirtake,
And of no wight no teching take;
For I that othir folke chaſtie
Woll not be taught fro my folie.

I ne love none hermitage more;
Al deſertis and holtis hore,
And grete wodis evèrichone
I let 'hem to the Baptiſt John;
I queth him quite, and him releſſe,
Of Egypt all the wildirneſſe:
To ferre were all my manſiouns
Fro allè citees and gode touns.
My paleis and mine houſe make I
There men maie renne in opinly,
And ſaie that I the worlde forſake;
But all amidde I builde and make
My houſe, and ſwimme and plaie therein
Bette than a fiſhe doth with his finne.

Of Antichrist'is men am I
Of whiche that Christ saieth opinly
Thei have habite of holinesse,
And livin in soche wickidnesse.
All outward lambin semin we,
Full of godenesse and of pite,
And inwarde we withoutin fable
Ben gredy wolvis ravisable.
We environ bothe londe and se;
With all the worlde werryin we:
We woll ordain of allè thing,
Of folkis gode and ther living.
If there be castill or cite
Within that any bougerons be,
Although that thei of Millaine were,
For thereof ben thei blamid there;
Or if a wight out of mesure
Would lene ther gold and take usure,
For that he is so coveitous,
Or if he be to lechirous,
Or these that hauntin simonie,
Or provost full of trechirie,
Or prelate living jolilie,
Or priest that halt his quein him by,
Or oldè whoris hostilers,
Or othir baudes or bordillers,

Or ellis blamed of any vice,
Of whiche men ſhouldin doen juſtice;
By all the ſainctis that we preie,
But thei defende them with lampreie,
With luce, with elis, with ſamons,
With tendir gees and with capons,
With tartis or with cheſſis fat,
With deinte flaunis brode and flat,
With caleweis or with pullaile,
With coninges or with fine vitaile,
That we undir our clothis wide
Ymakin through our golet glide,
Or but he woll doe come in haſte
Rae veniſon ybake in paſte,
Whethir ſo that he loure or groine
He ſhall have of a corde a loigne,
With whiche men ſhall him binde and lede
To brenne him for his ſinfull dede,
That men ſhull here him crie and rore
A mil'is waie about and more,
Or els he ſhall in priſon die
But if he woll his frendſhip buie,
Or ſmertin that that he hath doe
More than his gilt amountith to.
But and he couthe thorough his ſleight
Doe makin up a toure of height,
Nought rought I wher of ſtone or tre,
Or yerth or turvis, though it be,

Though it were of no voundè ſtone
Ywrought with ſquare and ſcantilone,
So that the toure were ſtuffid well
With allè richis temporell;
   And than that he would him up dreſſe
Enginis bothè more and leſſe,
To caſte at us by every ſide,
To berin his gode namè wide.
   Soche ſleightis I ſhullin you yeven,
Barelles of wine by ſixe or ſeven,
Or golde in ſackis grete plente,
He ſhould though ſone delivered be;
And if he have no ſuche pitences
Let him ſtudie' in equipolences,
And lerin lies and fallaces,
If that he would deſerve our graces,
Or we ſhall bere him ſoche witneſſe
Of ſinne and of his wretchidneſſe,
And doen his loſe ſo widè renne,
That all quicke we ſhouldin him brenne,
Or ellis yeve him ſoche penaunce
That is well worſe than the pitaunce.
   For thou ſhalt nevir for nothing
Con knowen aright by ther clothing
The traitours full of trechèrie
But thou ther werkis can eſpie.
   And ne had the gode keping be
Whilom of the' Univerſite,

That kepeth the kei of Chriſtendome,
We' had ben tourmentid all and ſome.
Soche ben the ſtinking Prophetis;
N'is none of 'hem that gode prophete is,
For thei through wickid entencion,
The yere of the' incarnacion
A thouſande and two hundrid yere
Five-and-fifte, ferther ne nere,
Broughtin a boke with ſorie grace,
To yeven enſample in common place,
That ſayid thus, though it were fable,
This the Goſpell pardurable
That fro the Holie Ghoſt is ſent:
Well were it worthy to be ybrent.
Entitlid was in ſoche manere
This boke of whiche I tell here,
There n'as no wight in al Paris
Beforne our Ladie at parvis
That thei ne might the bokè by;
The ſentence pleſed 'hem well truely.
To' the copie if him talent toke
Of the Evangeliſt'is boke,
There might he ſe by grete traiſoun
Full many' a falſe compariſoun.
As moche as thorough his grete might,
Be it of hete be it of light,
The ſunne yſurmountith the mone,
That troublir is, and chaungith ſone,

And the nutte kerneill dothe the ſhell,
I ſkorne nat that I you it tell,
Right ſo withoutin any gile
Surmountith this noble' Evangile
The worde of any' evangeliſt,
And to ther title thei toke Chriſt.
And many ſoche compariſoun,
Of whiche I make no mencioun,
Mightin men in that bokè finde,
Who ſo could of 'hem havin minde.
The' Uni'verſite, that was a ſlepe,
Gan for to braied, and takin kepe,
And at the noiſe the hedde up caſt,
Ne nevir ſithen ſlept it faſt,
But up it ſtert, and armis toke
Ayenſt this falſe horrible boke,
All redy battaile for to make,
And to the judge the boke thei take.
But thei that broughtin the boke there
Hent it anone awaie for fere;
Thei n'old ſhewe it no more a dele,
But than it kept, and kepin wele,
Till ſoche a time that thei maie ſe
That thei ſo ſtrong ywoxin be
That no wight maie 'hem well withſtonde,
For by that boke thei durſt not ſtonde:
Awaie thei gonne it for to bere,
For thei ne durſtin not anſwere

By expoſicion ne gloſe
To that that clerkis woll appoſe
Ayenſt the curſidneſſe iwis
That in that boke ywrittin is.
Now wotte I nat ne can nat ſe
What manir ende that there ſhall be
Of all this whiche that thei yhide,
But yet algate thei ſhall abide
Till that thei maie it bette defende;
This trowe I beſt woll be ther ende.
Thus Antichriſt abidin we,
For we ben all of his meine,
And what man that woll not be ſo
Right ſone he ſhall his life forgo:
We woll a peple' on him areiſe,
And through our gile doin him ceiſe,
And him on ſharpè ſperis rive,
Or othir waies bring him fro live,
But if that he woll folowe' iwis
That in our boke ywrittin is.

Thus moche woll our boke ſignifie,
That while Peter had maiſtirie
Maie nevir John ſhewe well his might.
Now have I you declarid right
The mening of the barke and rinde
That makith the entencions blinde;

But now at erſt I woll begin
To expoune you the pithe within,
And the ſeculers comprehende
That Chriſt'is lawe wollin defende,
And ſhould it kepin and maintenen
Ayeniſt them that all ſuſtenen,
And falſly to the peple techen
That John betokeneth 'hem to prechen
That there n'is lawe covenable
But thilke Goſpell pardurable
That fro the Holy Ghoſt was ſent
To tournin folke that ben miſwent.
The ſtrength of John thei undirſtonde
The grace in whiche thei ſaie thei ſtonde,
That doeth the ſinfull folke convert,
And 'hem to Jeſu Chriſt revert:
Full many'an othre' horriblete
Mowin men in that bokè ſe,
That ben commaundid doutileſs
Ayenſt the lawe of Rome expreſſe,
And all with Antichriſt thei holden,
As men maie in the boke beholden.
And than commaudin thei to ſleen
All tho that with Peter yben;
But thei ſhall nevir have that might,
And God to forne, for ſtrief to fight,
That thei ne ſhall ynough yfinde
That Peter's lawe ſhall have in minde,

And evir holde and so maintene,
That at the last it shall be sene
That thei shall all comin thereto
For aught that thei can speke or do.
  And thilkè lawe ne shall not stonde
That thei by John have undirstonde,
But maugre them it shall adoun,
And ben brought to confusion.
  But I woll stint of this matere,
For it is wondir long to here;
But had that ilkè boke endured
Of bettre' estate I were ensured,
And frendis have I yet parde
That han me set in grete degre.

Of all this worlde is emperour
Gile my fathir, the false trechour,
And emperesse my mothir is,
Maugre the Holie Ghoste iwis.
Our mightie linage and our rout
Reignith in every reigne about,
And well' is worthy we mini'sters be,
For all this worldè governe we,
And can the folke so well deceve
That none our gilis can perceive,
And though thei doen thei dare not saie;
The sothe dare no wight bewraie.

But he in Chriſt'is wrathe him ledeth
That more than Chriſt my brethrin dredeth;
He n'is no full gode champion
That dredeth ſoche ſimilacion,
Nor that for pain woll refuſin
Us to correcte and accuſin.
He woll not entremete by right,
Ne havin God in his eyen ſight,
And therefore God ſhall him punice:
But me ne reckith of no vice
Sithen men us loven communablie,
And holdin us for ſo worthie,
That we maie folke repreve echone,
And we n'ill have repreſe of none:
Whom ſhouldin folke worſhipin ſo
But us that ſtintin nevir mo
To patrin while that folke maie' us ſe
Though it not ſo behinde 'hem be?

And where is there more wode folie
Than to enhauncin chivalrie,
And lovin noble men and gaie,
That jolie clothis weren alwaie?
If thei be ſoche folke as thei ſemen,
So clene as men ther clothis demen,
And that ther wordes folowe ther dede,
It is grete pite out of drede
For thei woll be none hypocritis;
Of 'hem me thinkith gretè ſpite is:

I can not love 'hem on no ſide:
But beggirs with theſe hodis wide,
With ſleigh and palè facis lene,
And with graie clothis nat full clene,
But frettid full of tatar wagges,
And high ſhewis knoppid with dagges,
That frouncin like a qualè pipe,
Or botis riveling as a gipe;
To ſoche folke, as I you deviſe,
Should princis and theſe lordis wiſe
Take all ther landis and ther thinges,
Bothe warre and pece in govirninges,
To ſoche folke ſhould a prince him yeve
That would his life in honour live.
And if thei be nat as thei ſeme,
That ſervin thus the worlde to queme,
There would I dwellin to deceive
The folke, for thei ſhall nat perceve.
But I ne ſpeke in no ſoche wiſe
That men ſhould humble' habite diſpiſe;
So that no pride there undir be
No man ſhould hate, as thinkith me,
The povir man in ſoche clothing;
But God ne preſith him nothing
That ſaieth he hath the worlde forſake,
And hath to worldly glory' him take,
And woll of ſoche delicis uſe;
Who maie that beggir well excuſe?

That papelarde that him yeldith ſo,
And woll to worldly eſe ygo,
And ſaieth that he the worlde hath left,
And gredily it gripith eft,
He is the hounde, ſhame is to ſain,
That to his caſting goeth again.

But unto you dare I not lie,
But might I felin or eſpie
That ye percevid it nothing
Ye ſhouldin have a ſtarke leſing:
Right in your honde thus to beginne,
I ne wolde it let for no ſinne.
The god lough at the wondir tho,
And every wight gan laugh alſo,
And ſayid, Lo, here a man right
For to be truſtie to' every wight!

Falſe Semblant, (quod Love) ſaie to me,
Sith I thus have avauncid the,
That in my court is thy dwelling,
And of Ribaudes ſhalt be my king,
Wolt thou well holdin my forwardes?
Ye, Sir', quod he, from hens forwardes
Had ner your fathir here beforne
Servaunt ſo true ſithe he was borne.
That is ayeniſt all nature.
Sir, put you in that avinture,

For though ye borowes take of me
The ſikerer ſhall ye nevir be
For hoſtagis ne ſikirneſſe
Or chartris for to bere witneſſe:
I take your ſelf to recorde here
That men ne maie in no manere
Terin the wolfe out of his hide
Till he be ſlain bothe backe and ſide,
Though men him bete and all defile:
What! wene ye that I woll begile?
For I am clothid mekily
There undre' is all my trechiry;
Mine herte chaungith nevir the mo
For none habite in which I go:
Though I have chere of ſimpleneſſe
I am not werie of ſhreudneſſe:
My lemman, ſtrainid Abſtenaunce,
Hath miſtir of my purveiaunce,
She had full long ago be dedde
N'ere for my counſaile and my redde:
Let her alone, and you and me.
And Love anſwerid, I truſt the
Without borowe, for I woll none.
And Falſe Semblant the thefe anone
Right in that ilkè ſamè place,
That had of treſon all his face
Right blacke within and white without,
Thanking him gan on his knees lout.

Than was there nought but every man
Now to assaute that sailin can,
(Quod Love) and that full hardily:
Than armid thei 'hem cominly
Of soche armour as to 'hem fell.
Whan thei were armid fiers and fell
Thei went 'hem forthe all in a rout
And set the castill all about;
Thei will not awaie for no drede
Till it so be that thei ben dede,
Or till thei have the castill take.
And four battellis gan thei make,
And partid 'hem in foure anone,
And toke ther waie, and forthe thei gone
The foure gatis for to assaile,
Of whiche the kepirs woll not faile,
For thei ben neithir sicke ne dede,
But hardie folke, and strong in dede.
Now woll I saine the countenaunce
Of False Semblant and Abstinaunce,
That ben to Wickid Tong ywent;
But first thei helde ther parliment
Whethir it to be doin were
To makin 'hem be knowin there
Or ellis walkin forthe disgised;
But at the lastè thei devised
That thei would gone in tapinage,
As it were in a pilgrimage,

Like gode and holie folke unfeined;
And anon Dame Abſtinence ſtreined
Toke on a robe of cameline
And gan her gratche as a bigine.
  A largè coverchief of threde
She wrappid all about her hede;
But ſhe forgate not her pſaltere.
  A paire of bedis eke ſhe bere
Upon a lace all of white threde,
On whiche that ſhe her bedis bede;
But ſhe ne bought 'hem nevre' a dele,
For thei were given her, I wote wele,
God wote of a full holie frere,
That ſaied he was her fathir dere,
To whom ſhe had oftiner went
Than any frere of his covent;
  And he viſitid her alſo,
And many' a ſermone ſaied her to;
He n'olde let for no man on live
That he ne would her oftin ſhrive,
And with ſo grete devocion
Thei madin her confeſſion
That thei had oftin for the nones
Two heddis in one hode at ones.
  Of faire ſhape I deviſed her the,
But pale of face ſometime was ſhe;
That falſè traitoureſſe untrewe
Was like that ſalowe horſe of hewe

That in the' Apocalyps is ſhewed,
That ſignifieth tho folke beſhrewed
That ben all full of trecherie,
And pale thorough hypocriſie;
For on that horſe no colour is
But onely dedde and pale iwis:
Of ſoche a colour enlangoured
Was Abſtinence iwis coloured;
Of her eſtate ſhe her repented
Right as her viſage repreſented.
She had a burdoune all of theft
That Gile had yeve her of his yeft,
And a ſkrippè of faint diſtreſſe,
That full was of elengèneſſe,
And forthe ſhe walkid ſobirlie.
And Falſe Semblant ſaint, *Je vous die*,
And as it were for ſoche miſtere
Doin on the cope of a frere,
With chere ſimple and full pitous
His loking was not diſdeinous
Ne proude, but meke and ful peſible.
About his necke he bare a Bible,
And ſquyirly forthe gan he gon,
And for to reſt his limmes upon
He had of treſon a potent;
As he were feble' his waie he went.
But in his ſleve he gan to thring
A raſour ſharpe and well biting,

That was yforgid in a forge
Whiche that men clepin Coupè Gorge.
  So long forth ther waie thei nomin
Till thei to Wickid Tong comin,
That at his gate ywas ſitting,
And ſawe folke in the waie paſſing.
  The pilgrimis ſawe he faſt by
That berin 'hem full mekily,
And humbly thei with him ymette;
Dame Abſtinence firſt him ygrette,
And ſithe him Falſe Semblant ſalved,
And he 'hem, but he not remeved,
For he ne drede him not a dele,
For whan he ſawe ther facis wele
Alwaie in hertè him thought ſo
He ſhould knowin 'hem bothè two,
For well he knewe Dame Abſtinaunce,
But he ne knewe not Conſtreinaunce;
He knewe nat that ſhe was conſtrained,
Ne of her thev'is life yfained,
But wende ſhe come of will all fre,
But ſhe come in othir degre,
And if of gode will ſhe began
That will ywas failid her than.

And Falſe Semblant had he ſaine alſe,
But he knewe nat that he was falſe;
Yet falſe was he, but his falſneſſe
Ne coud he nat eſpie nor geſſe,

For Semblant was ſo ſlie ywrought
That falſeneſſe he ne eſpied nought;
But haddeſt thou knowin him beforne
Thou woldiſt on a boke have ſworne,
Whan thou him ſawe in thilke araie,
That he that whilom was ſo gaie,
And of the daunce Jolie Robin,
Was tho become a Jacobin:
But ſothly what ſo men 'hem call
Frere prechouris ben gode men all;
Ther ordir wickidly thei beren
Soche minſtrellis if that thei weren.
  So ben Auguſtins and Cordileres,
And Carmis, and eke ſackid freres,
And all the freris ſhode and bare,
Though ſome of 'hem ben grete and ſquare,
Full holy men as I 'hem deme;
Everiche of hem would gode man ſeme;
But ſhalt thou nevir of apparence
Sein conclude gode conſequence
In any argument iwis,
If exiſtens all failid is;
For men maie finde alwaie ſopheme
The conſequence to enveneme,
Who ſo hath had the ſubtilte
The double ſentence for to ſe.
  Whan the pilgrimis comin were
To Wickid Tong that dwellid there,

Ther harneis nigh 'hem was algate;
By Wickid Tong adoune thei ſate,
That badde 'hem nere him for to come,
And of tidingis tell him ſome,
And ſaied 'hem, What caſe makith you
To comin into this place now?

Sir, ſayid Strainid Abſtinaunce,
We for to dryin our penaunce
With hertis pitous and devout
Are commen as pilgrimes gon about;
Well nigh on fote alwaie we go;
Full doughtie ben our helis two,
And thus bothe we ben yſent
Throughout the worlde that is miſwent
To yeve enſample' and preche alſo;
To fiſhin ſinfull men we go,
For othir fiſhing ne fiſhe we:
And, leve Sir, for that charite,
As we be wont, erbo'rowe we crave;
Your life to amenne Chriſt it ſave,
And ſo it ſhould you not diſpleſe
We wouldin, if it were your eſe,
A ſhort ſermon unto you ſain.
And Wickid Tong anſwered again,
The houſe (quod he) ſoche as ye ſe
Shall nat be warnid you for me:

Saie what you liſt and I woll here.
Graunt mercie! tho ſwetè Sir dere,
Quod aldirfirſt Dame Abſtinence,
And thus began ſhe her ſentence:
  Sir, the firſt vertue for certaine,
The gretiſt and moſt ſovèraine
That maie be founde in any man
For having or for wit he can
That is his tong for to refrain;
Therto ought every wight him pain,
For it is bettir ſtill to be
Than for to ſpekin harme parde,
And he that harkeneth it gladly
He is no gode man ſikirly.
  And, Sir, aboven all othir ſinne
In that art thoū moſt giltie inne;
Thou ſpake a jape not long a go,
  And, Sir, that was right evill doe.
Of a yong man that here repaired,
And nevir yet this place apaired,
Thou ſaideſt he awaitid nothing
But to diſceve Faire Welcoming:
Ye ſaidin nothing ſothe of that,
But, Sir, ye lie, I tell you plat:
He cometh no more ne goeth parde;
I trowe ye ſhal him nevir ſe;
Faire Welcoming in priſon is
That ofte hath plaied with you er this

The fairiſt gamis that he coude
Withoutin filth, or ſtil or loude;
Now dare he not himſelfe ſolace;
Ye han alſo the man do chace,
That he dare neithir come ne go:
What mevith you to hate him ſo
But propirly your wickid thought,
That many' a falſe leſing hath thought,
That mevith your foule eloquence,
That janglith evre' in audience,
And on the folke ariſith blame,
And doeth 'hem diſhonour and ſhame
For thing that maie have no preving
But likelineſſe and contriving?
For I dare ſaine that Reſon demeth
It is not al ſoth thing that ſemeth;
And it is ſinne for to controve
Any thing that is to reprove;
This wote ye wele, and, Sir, therfore
Ye arne to blame mochil the more;
And nathèleſſe he reckith lite
He yeveth not now therof a mite,
For if he thoughtin harme, parfaie
He would ycome and gone all daie;
He ne coude not himſelf abſtene:
Now cometh he not, and that is ſene,
For he ne taketh of it no cure,
But if it be through avinture,

And laſſe than othir folke algate,
And thou here watchiſt at the gate
With ſpere in thine areſt alwaie,
There muſe muſarde all the longe daie;
Thou wakiſt night and daie for thought;
Iwis thy traveile is for nought,
And Jelouſie withoutin faile
Shall nevir quite the thy traveile;
And ſkathe is that Faire Welcoming,
Withoutin any treſpaſſing,
Shal wrongfully in priſon be,
There wepith and languiſhith he;
And though thou nevir yet iwis
Agiltiſt man no more but this
Take not a grefe, it were worthy
To put the out of this baily,
And aftirwarde in priſon lie,
And fettrid the till that thou die;
For thou ſhalt for this ſinnè dwelle
Right in the devil's arſe of helle
But if that thou repentè the.
Maiſaie thou lieſt falſely (quod he.)
What, welcome with miſchauncè now!
Have I therfore herberid you
To ſaie me ſhame and eke reprove,
With ſorie happe to your behove?
Am I to day your herbegere?
Go herbir you els where than here

That han a lier callid me.
Two tregetours arte thou and he,
That in mine hous do me this ſhame,
And for my ſotheſawe ye me blame.
Is this the ſermon that ye me make?
To all the divils I me take,
Or ellis God thou me confounde,
But er men didden this caſtill fóunde
It paſſith not ten daies or twelve
But it was tolde right to my ſelve,
And as thei ſaide right ſo tolde I;
He kiſte the Roſè privily;
Thus ſaide I now, and have ſaid yore,
I n'ot where he did any more:
Why ſhould men ſaie me ſuche a thing
If that it had yben gabbing?
Right ſo ſaide I, and woll ſaie yet,
I trowe I lyid not of it;
And with my bemis I woll blowe
To allè neighbouris arowe
How he hath bothe comin and gone.
Tho ſpake Falſe Semblant right anone,
All is nat goſpell out of doute
That men ſaine in the toune aboute:
Lay no deſe ere to my ſpeking,
I ſwere you, Sir, it is gabbing;
I trow ye wote well certainly
That no man loveth him tendirly

That faith him harme, if he wote it,
All be he ner fo pore of wit;
And fothe is alfo fikirly,
This know ye, Sir, as well as I,
That lovirs gladly wol vifiten
The placis there ther loves habiten:
This man you loveth and eke honoureth,
This man to fervin you laboureth,
And clepith you his frende fo dere,
And this man makith you gode chere,
And every where that he you meteth
He you faleweth and he you greteth;
He prefith nat fo ofte that ye
Oughte of' his coming encombrid be;
There prefin othir folke on you
Ful oftir than he doith now;
And if his hert him ftrainid fo
Unto the Rofè for to go
Ye fhould him fene fo oftin nede
That ye fhould take him with the dede;
He coude his comming not forbere,
Though ye him thrillid with a fpere;
It n'ere not than as it is now;
But truftith well, I fwere it you,
That it is clene out of his thought.
  Sir, certis he ne thinketh it nought,
No more ne doth Faire Welcoming,
That fore abyith all this thing,

And if thei were of one assent,
Full sone ywere the Rose ybent,
Tho the malgre your's would ybe.
  And, Sir, of o thing herkeneth me;
Sithe ye this man that lovith you
Han saide such harme and shamè now,
Wittith well if he gessid it
Ye maie well demin in your wit
He ne wolde nothing love you so,
Ne callin you his frende also,
But night and daie he wollin wake
The castill to distroie and take,
Yf it were sothe as ye devise;
Or some man in some manir wise
Might it warnin him every dele,
Or by himselfe percevin wele,
For sithe he might not come and gone,
As he was whilom wonte to done,
He might it sonè wite and se,
But now all othirwise wote he.
  Than have we, Sir, all uttirly
Deservid hell, and jolily
The deth of hellè doutilesse,
That thrallin folke so giltilesse.
  False Semblant so provith this thing
That he ne can none answering,
And seeth alwaie soche apparaunce
That nigh he fel in repentaunce,

And ſaid him; Sir, it maie well be;
Semblant, a gode man ſemin ye,
And Abſtinence, ful wiſe ye ſeme;
Of o talent you bothe I deme:
What counſaile wol ye to me yeven?
Right here anon thou ſhalt be ſhriven,
And ſay thy ſinne withoutin more;
Of this ſhalt thou repent the ſore,
For I am prieſt, and have poſte
To ſhrive folk of moſt dignite
That ben as wide as world maie dure;
Of al this world I have the cure,
And that had nevir yet perſoun
Ne vicarie' of no manir toun.
And God it wot I have of the
A thouſande timis more pite
Than hath thy prieſt parochiall,
Though he thy frende be ſpeciall.
I have avantage in o wiſe,
That your prelates ben not ſo wiſe
Ne halfe ſo lettrid as am I;
I am licenſid boldily
In divinite for to rede,
And to confeſſin out of drede.
Yf that ye wol you now confeſſe,
And leve your ſinnis more and leſſe,
Without abode knele doune anon
And you ſhal have abſolucion.

Here endeth The Romaunt of the Roſe.

HERE FOLOWETH THE BOKE OF

TROILUS AND CRESEIDE.

IN FIVE BOKES.

THE double ſorow of Troilus to telle,
That was the King Priamus ſonne of Troy,
In loving how his aventuris felle
From wo to wele, and aftir out of joy,
My purpoſe is er that I partè fro'y.
Thou Theſiphone! thou helpe me t'endite
This woful verſe, that wepin as I write.

To the I clepe, thou goddeſſe of tourment,
Thou cruil wight, ſorowing ay in paine!
Helpe me, that am the wofull inſtrument
That helpith lovirs as I can complaine;
For wel ſit it, the ſothè for to ſaine,
A woful wight to have a drery fere,
And to a ſorowfull tale a ſory chere.

For I, that god of Lov'is ſervauntes ſerve,
Ne dare to love for mine unlikelineſſe,
Prayin for ſpede, al ſhould I therfore ſterve,
So ferre am I fro his helpe in derkeneſſe;
But nathèleſſe if this may done gladneſſe
To any lovir, and his cauſe aveile,
Have he the thanke and mine be the traveile.

Troilus and Creſeide] In this excellent boke is ſhewed the fervent love of Troilus to Creſeide, whom he enjoyed for a time, and her grete untruthe to him againe in giving her ſelf to Diomedes, who in the end did ſo caſt her off that ſhe came to grete miſery. In whiche diſcourſe Chaucer liberally treteth of the divine purveiaunce. *Urry.*

But ye lovirs that bathin in gladnesse,
Yf any drope of pite in you be,
Remembrith you of passid hevinesse
That ye have felte, and on the' adversite
Of othir folke, and thinkith how that ye
Han felte that Lovè durst you to displese
Or ye han won him with to gret an ese.

And prayith for 'hem that ben in the cace
Of Troilus, as ye may aftir here
That Love 'hem bring in hevin to solace;
And eke for me prayith to God so dere,
That I have might to shew in some manere
Suche paine and wo as Lov'is folke endure
In Troilus unsely avinture.

And biddith eke for them that ben dispeired
In love, that nevir will recovered be,
And eke for them that falsely ben apeired
Through wickid tongis, be it he or she,
And biddith God for his benignite
So graunt 'hem sone out of this world to pace
That ben dispairid out of Lov'is grace.

And biddith eke for them that ben at ese
That God 'hem graunt in love perseveraunce,
And sende 'hem grace ther lovis for to plese,
That it to love be worship and plesaunce;
For so hope I my selfe best to avaunce
To pray for them that Lov'is servauntes be,
And write ther wo, and live in charite;

And for to have of them compaſſioun,
As though I were ther ownè brothir dere.
Now herkenith with a gode entencioun,
For now wol I go ſtreight to my matere,
In whiche ye may the double ſorowes here
Of Troilus in loving of Creſeide,
And how ſhe forſoke him er that ſhe deide.

It is wel wiſt how that the Grekis ſtrong
In armis with a thouſand ſhippis went
To Troiè wardis, and the cite long
Beſiegedin, nigh ten yeres ere thei ſtent,
And how in divers wiſe and one entent,
The raviſhing to wreke of Queine Heleine,
By Paris don, thei wroughtin all their peine.
Now fell it ſo that in the toune there was
Dwelling a lord of gret authorite,
A gret divine, that clepid was Calcas,
That in that ſcience ſo' experte was that he
Knew wel that Troiè ſhould diſtroyid be
By anſwere of his god, that hight was thus
Dan Phebus, or Apollo Delphicus.
So whan this Calcas knew by calculing,
And eke by the' anſwere of this god Apollo,
That Grekis ſhouldin ſuche a peple bring
Thorow the whiche that Troy muſt be fordo,
He caſte anone out of the toune to go,
For wel he wiſt by ſorte that Troiè ſholde
Diſtroyid be, ye, would who ſo or n'olde;

Wherfore for to departin ſoftily
Toke purpoſe ful this wight, forknowing, wiſe,
And to the Grekis hoſt ful privily
He ſtale anone, and thei in curteis wiſe
Didin to him both worſhip and ſervice,
In truſt that he hath conning 'hem to rede
In every peril which that was to drede.

Grete rumour roſe whan it was firſt eſpied
In al the toune, and opinly was ſpoken
That Calcas traitour fled was, and alied
To them of Grece; and caſte was to be wroken
On him that falſly hath his faith to broken,
And ſaid that he and al his kinne atones
Were worthy to be brent both fell and bones.

Now had this Calcas lefte in this miſchaunce,
Unknowing of this falſe and wicked dede,
A doughtir whiche that was in grete penaunce,
And of her life ſhe was full ſore in drede,
And ne wiſt nevir what beſt was to rede;
And as a widowe was ſhe and alone,
And n'iſt to whom ſhe might ymake her mone.

Creſeide ywas this ladies name aright;
As to my dome in al Troy'is cite
Moſt fairiſt lady, paſſing every wight;
So angelike ſhone her natiſe beaute
That like a thing immortal ſemid ſhe,
And therwith was ſhe ſo parfite a creture
As ſhe had be made in ſcorning of Nature.

This lady, whiche that al day herde at ere
Her fathir's ſhame, his falſhed, and traiſoun,
Ful nigh out of her wit for ſorow' and fere,
In widowe's habite large of ſamite broun,
Before Hector on knees ſhe fill adoun,
His mercy bad, her ſelfin excuſing
With pitous voice, and tendirly weping.

Now was this Hector pitous of nature,
And ſaw that ſhe was ſorowful begone,
And that ſhe was ſo faire a creature,
Of his godeneſſe he gladid her anone,
And ſaidè, Let your fathir's traiſon gone
Forth with miſchaunce, and ye your ſelf in joye
Dwellith with us whilis you liſt in Troye,

And al the honour men may do you have,
As ferforth as though your fathir dwelt here,
Ye ſhul have, and your body ſhul men ſave,
As fer as I may ought enquire and here.
And ſhe him thankid with ful humble chere,
And oftir wolde and it had been his will,
And toke her leve, went home, and helde her ſtill.

And in her houſe ſhe' abode with ſuch meine
As til her honour nede was for to holde;
And while ſhe was dwelling in that cite
She kepte her eſtate, and of yong and olde
Ful wel beloved, and wel men of her tolde;
But whethir that ſhe childrin had or none
I rede it nat, therfore I let it gone.

The thingis fellin as thei done of werre
Betwixin 'hem of Troie and Grekis ofte,
For some day boughtin thei of Troie it derre,
And eft the Grekis foundin nothing soft
The folke of Troie: and thus Fortune aloft
And undir efte gan 'hem to whelmin bothe,
Aftir her course, aie while that thei wer wrothe.

But how this toune came to distruccion
Ne fallith not to purpose me to tel;
For why? it were a long digression
Fro my matir, and you to long to dwel;
But the Troyan jestis, all as thei fel
In Omer, or in Dares, or in Dite,
Who so that can may rede 'hem as thei write.

But though the Grekis them of Troie in shetten,
And ther cite besegid al aboute,
Ther olde usagis n'oldin thei not letten,
As to honouren ther goddis ful devoute,
But aldirmost in honour out of doute
Thei had a relicke hight Palladion,
That was ther trust abovin everichon.

And so befel, whan comin was the time
Of Aprilis, whan clothid is the mede
With newè grene, of lusty Ver the prime,
And with swete smelling flouris white and rede
In sondrie wise shewid, as I you rede,
The folke of Troie ther observaunces olde,
Palladion'is fest, went for to holde.

Unto the temple in all ther beſt wiſe
In general went every manir wight
To herkin of Palladion's ſervice,
And namily many a luſty knight,
And many' a lady freſh and maidin bright;
Full well beſeyn the moſt meynè and leſt
Both for the ſeſon and for the hie feſt.

Among theſe othir folke was Creſeida,
In widdowe's habite blake; but nathèles
Right as our firſt lettir is now an A,
In beaute firſt ſo ſtode ſhe makèles;
Her godely loking gladdid all the pres;
N'as nevir ſene thing to be praiſed ſo derre,
Nor under cloudè blake ſo bright a ſterre

As was Creſeide, thei ſaidin everichone
That her beheldin in her blakè wede;
And yet ſhe ſtode ful lowe and ſtil alone,
Behinde all othir folke, in litil brede,
And nie the dore, aye undir ſham'is drede,
Simple' of atire, and debonaire of chere,
With full aſſurid loking and manere.

Dan Troilus, as he was wont to gide
His yongè knightis, ladde 'hem up and doune
In thilke large temple on evèry ſide,
Beholding aie the ladies of the toune
Now here now there, for no devocioune
Had he to none to revin him his reſt,
But gan to praiſe and lackin whom he leſt.

And in his walke ful faſte he gan to waiten
If knight or ſquyir of his company
Gan for to ſike, or let his eyin baiten
On any woman that he coude eſpie,
Then he would ſmile, and holde it a folie,
And ſay him thus; O Lord! ſhe ſlepith ſofte
For love of the, whan thou turniſt ful ofte. 196

I have herde tel pardieux of your living,
Ye lovirs, and of your leude obſervaunce,
And whiche a labour folke have in winning
Of love, and in the keping whiche doutaunce,
And whan your pray is loſt wo and penaunce.
O very folis! blinde and nice be ye,
There is not one can ware by othir be. 203

And with that worde he gan caſt up his browe
Aſcaunce, lo! is this not wiſely iſpoken?
At whiche the god of Love gan lokin rowe
Right for diſpite, and ſhope him to be wroken;
He kidde anon his bowe was not to broken,
For ſodainly he hitte him at the full,
And yet as proude a pecocke can he pul. 210

O blindè worlde! o blinde entencioun!
How oftin fallith al th' effecte contraire
Of ſurquedrie and foule preſumpcioun?
For caught is proude and caught is debonaire;
This Troilus is clombin on the ſtaire,
And litil wenith that he mote diſcende;
But al day failith thing that folis wende. 217

As proude Bayard beginnith for to ſkippe
Out of the way (ſo prickith him his corne)
Till he a laſhe have of the longè whippe,
Than thinkith he though I praunce al beforne
Firſt in the traiſe, full fatte and newe iſhorne,
Yet am I but an horſe, and hors'is lawe
I muſt endure, and with my feris drawe: 224

So fared it by this fiers and proudè knight;
Though he a worthy king'is ſonnè were,
And wenid that nothing had had ſuch might
Ayenſt his wil that ſhould his hertè ſtere,
Yet with a loke his hert ywoxe on fire,
That he that now was moſt in pride above
Woxe ſodainly moſte ſubjećt unto love. 231

Forthy enſample takith of this man
Ye wiſè, proude, and worthy folkis all,
To ſkornin Love, whiche that ſo ſonè can
The fredome of your hertis to him thral;
For evir was and evir ſhall befal
That Love is he that al thingis may binde,
For no man maie fordo the law of kinde. 238

That this be ſothe hath previd and doth yet,
For this (trowe I) ye knowin al and ſome,
Men redin nat that folke han gretir wit
Than thei that han ben moſt with love inome,
And ſtrengiſt folke ben therwith ovircome,
The worthyiſt and gretiſt of degre;
This was and is, and yet man ſhal it ſe. 245

And truiliche it ſitte well to be ſo,
For aldirwiſiſt han therwith ben pleſed,
And thei that han ben aldirmoſte in wo
With love han ben comfortid moſt and eſed,
And ofte it hath the cruill herte apeſed,
And worthy folke made worthyir of name,
And cauſith moſt to dredin vice and ſhame. 252

Now ſith it may nat godely be withſtonde,
And is a thing ſo vertuous in kinde,
Ne grudgith nought to Love for to ben bonde,
Sithe as him ſelvin liſt he may you binde;
The yerde is bette that bowin wol and winde
Than that that breſt; and therfore I you rede
Folowith him that ſo well can you lede. 259

But for to tellin forth in ſpeciall
As of this king'is ſonne of whiche I tolde,
And levin othir thing collaterall,
Of him thinke I my tale forth to holde,
Bothe of his joye and of his caris colde,
And all his werke as touching this matere,
For I it gan, I wol therto refere. 266

Within the temple wente him forth playing
This Troilus with every wight about,
On this lady and now on that loking,
Whereſo ſhe were of toune or of without;
And upon caſe befil that through a rout
His eye ypercid, and ſo depe it went
Til on Creſeide it ſmote, and there it ſtent, 273

And ſodainly for wondir wext aſtoned,
And gan her bet beholde in thrifty wiſe;
O mercy, God! thought he, where haſt thou wonned,
That arte ſo faire and godely to deviſe?
Therwith his hert began to ſprede and riſe,
And ſofte he ſighid, leſt men might him here,
And caught ayen his formir playing chere.

She n'as nat with the leſte of her ſtature,
But al her limmis ſo wel anſwering
Werin to womanhode, that creature
Was nevir laſſè manniſhe in ſeming,
And eke the purè wiſe of her mening
She ſhewid wel, that men might in her geſſe
Honour, eſtate, and womanly nobleſſe.

Tho Troilus right wondir wel withall
Gan for to like her mening and her chere,
Whiche ſomdele deignous was, for ſhe let fal
Her loke alite a ſide, in ſuche manere
Aſcauncis, what! may I nat ſtondin here?
And aftir that her loking gan ſhe light,
That never thought him ſene ſo gode a ſight.

And of her loke in him there gan to quicken
So grete deſire and ſuche affectioun,
That in his hert'is bottom gan to ſticken
Of her his fixe and depe impreſſioun;
And though he erſt had porid up and doun
Than was he glad his hornis in to ſhrinke;
Unnethis wiſt he how to loke or winke.

Lo! he that lete him ſelvin ſo conning,
And ſcornid 'hem that lov'is painis drien,
Was ful unwaſe that Love had his dwelling
Within the ſubtil ſtremis of her eyen,
That ſodainly him thought that he felte dien
Right with her loke the ſpirite in his herte:
Bleſſid be Love, that thus can folke converte!

She thus in blake loking to Troilus
Ovir al thing he ſtode for to beholde,
But his deſire, ne wherefore he ſtode thus,
He neithir chere made ne worde thereof tolde,
But from aferre, his manir for to holde,
On othir thing ſomtime his loke he caſt,
And efte on her, while that the ſervice laſt.

And aftir this, not fully all awhaped,
Out of the temple eſiliche he wente,
Repenting him that evir he had japed
Of Lov'is folke, leſt fully the diſcente
Of ſcorne fil on him ſelf; but what he mente
Leſte it were wiſte on any manir ſide
His wo he gan diſſimulin and hide.

Whan he was fro this temple thus departed
He ſtreight anone unto his palais turneth;
Right with her loke thorough ſhottin and darted,
Al frainith he in luſte that he ſojourneth,
And all his chere and ſpeche alſo' he abnormeth,
And aie of Lov'is ſervauntes every while,
Himſelfe to wrie, at 'hem he gan to ſmile,

And ſayd, Ah, Lord! ſo ye live all in luſt,
Ye lovirs, for the conningiſt of you,
That ſervith moſt ententiſeliche and beſt,
Him tite as oftin harme therof as prowe;
Your hire is quite ayen, ye, God wote howe,
Not wel for wel, but ſkorne for gode ſerviſe;
In faithe your ordir is ruled in gode wiſe. 336

In no certaine ben your obſervaunces,
But it in a few ſely pointis be,
Ne nothing aſketh ſo gret attendaunces
As doth your laie, and that knowin al ye;
But that is not the worſt, as mote I the,
But tolde I which were the worſt point, I leve,
Al ſaide I ſothe, ye woldin at me greve. 343

But take this: that ye lovirs ofte eſchewe,
Or ellis done of gode entencion,
Ful ofte thy lady wol it miſſeconſtrewe,
And deme it harme in her opinion,
And yet if ſhe for othir encheſon
Be wroth, then ſhalt thou have a groin anone:
Lorde! wel is him that may bene of you one! 350

But for al this, whan that he ſeeth his time,
He held his pees, non othir bote him gained,
For Love began his fethirs ſo to lime,
That wel unneth unto his folke he fained
That othir beſy nedis him diſtrained:
So wo was him that what to done he n'iſt,
But bad his folke to gone where as 'hem liſt. 357

And whan that he in chambre was alone
He doune upon his bedd'is fete him ſette,
And firſt he gan to ſike and efte to grone,
And thought aie on her ſo withoutin lette,
That as he ſatte and woke his ſpirite mette
That he her ſaugh and temple', and all the wiſe
Right of her loke, and gan it newe aviſe.

Thus gan he make a mirrour of his minde,
In whiche he ſaugh all wholly her figure,
And that he wel coude in his hert yfinde
It was to him a right gode avinture
To love ſuche one, and if he did his cure
To ſervin her yet might he fal in grace,
Or els for one of her ſervauntes pace:

Imagining that ne travaile nor grame
Ne might for ſo godely an one be lorne,
As ſhe ne him for his deſire no ſhame,
Al were it wiſte, but in priſe and upborne
Of allè lovirs, wel more than beforne.
Thus argumentid he in his ginning,
Ful unaviſid of his wo comming.

Thus toke he purpoſe Lov'is crafte to ſewe,
And thought that he would workin privily,
Firſt for to hide all his deſire in mewe,
From every wight iborne all uttirly,
But he might ought recovered ben therby,
Remembring him that *Love to wide iblowe*
Yelt bittir frute, although ſwete ſede be ſowe.

And ore al this ful mokil more he thought
What for to ſpeke and what to holdin inne,
And what to artin her to love he ſought,
And on a ſonge anone right to beginne,
And gan loude on his ſorowe for to winne;
For with gode hope he gan fully aſſente
Creſeida for to love, and nought repente. 392

And of his ſonge not onely his ſentence,
(As write mine auctour, callid Lolius)
But plainely, ſave our tong'is difference,
I dare wel ſay in al that Troilus
Saied in his ſonge, lo! every word right thus
As I ſhal ſaine, and who ſo liſt it here
Lo! next this verſe he may it findin here. 399

The ſonge of Troilus out of Petrarche.

If no love is, o God, what fele I ſo!
And if love is, what thing and whiche is he?
If love be gode from whence comith my wo?
If it be wicke a wondir thinkith me,
Whan every turment and adverſite
That cometh of him may to me ſavery thinke,
For aye more thurſt I the more that I drinke. 406

And if that at mine ownè luſt I brenne,
From whence comith my wailing and my pleinte?
If harme agre me wherto plaine I thenne?
I n'ot nere why unwery that I feinte.
O quickè deth! o ſwetè harme ſo queinte!
How may I ſe in me ſoche quantite
But if that I conſente that it ſo be? 413

And if that I conſente I wrongfully
Complaine iwis. Thus poſſid to and fro,
As ſtereleſs wight is in a bote, am I,
Amidde the ſe atwixin windis two
That in contrarie ſtondin evirmo.
Alas! what is this wondir maladie?
For hete of colde, for colde of hete, I die. 420

And to the god of Love thus ſayid he
With pitous voice; O Lorde! now your'is is
My ſpirite, whiche that oughtin your'is be;
You thonke I, Lord, that han me brought to this;
But whethir goddeſſe or woman iwis
She be I n'ot whiche, that ye do me ſerve,
But as her man I wol aie live and ſterve. 427

Ye ſtondin in her eyin mightily,
As in a place unto your vertue digne,
Wherfore o Lord! if my ſervice or I
May likin you, ſo bethe me to ben,
For mine eſtate royal here I reſigne
Into her honde, and with ful humble chere
Become her man, as to my lady dere. 434

Endeth the ſonge.

In him ne deigned to ſparin blode royall
The fire of love, wherefro may God me bleſſe!
Ne him forbare in no degre for all
His vertue or his excellent proweſſe,
But helde him as his thrall lowe in diſtreſſe,
And brende him ſo in ſondrie wiſe aie newe,
That ſixty times a day he loſte his hewe. 441

So muchill daie fro daie his ownè thought
For luste to her gan quickin and encrese,
That everiche othir charge he sette at nought;
Forthy ful oftin, his hote fire to cese,
To sene her godely loke he gan to prese,
For therby to ben esid wel he wende,
And aie the nere he was the more he brende;

For aie the nere the fire the hottir is,
This (trowe I) knowith al this company;
But were he ferre or nere I dare saie this,
By night or daie, for wisedome or folie,
His hertè, whiche that is his brest'is eye,
Was aie on her, that fairir was to sene
Than evir was Helein or Polyxene.

Eke of the daie there passid nat an houre
But to himself a thousande times he saide,
God godely, to whom I serve and laboure
As best I can, now would to God, Creseide,
Ye wouldin on me rue er that I diede;
My dere herte, alas! mine hele, and my hewe,
And life, is loste but ye woll on me rewe.

All othir dredis werin from him fledde
Bothe of th' assiege and his salvacion,
Ne' in his desire none othir fancy bredde
But argumentes to this conclusion,
That she on him would han compassion,
And he to ben her man while he maie dure;
Lo here his life, and from his death his cure.

The ſharpè ſhouris fell of armis preve
That Hector or his othir brethrin didden
Ne made him onely therefore onis meve,
And yet was he, wher ſo men went or ridden,
Found one the beſt, and lengiſt time abiden
There peril was, and eke did ſuche travail
In armis that to thinke it was mervaile.

But for none hate he to the Grekis had,
Ne alſo for the reſcous of the toun,
Ne made him thus in armis for to mad,
But onely lo! for this concluſioun,
To likin her the bet for his renoun:
Fro daie to daie in armis ſo he ſpedde
That all the Grekis as the deth him dredde.

And fro this forthe tho reſt him love his ſlepe,
And made his mete his foe, and eke his ſorow
Gan multiplie, that who ſo tokè kepe
It ſhewid in his hewe both even' and morow,
Therfore a title he gan him to borowe
Of othir ſickeneſſe, leſt men of him wende
That the hotte fire of cruill love him brende;

And ſaied he by a fevir fared amis:
But how it was certain I cannot ſay,
If that his ladie underſtode nat this,
Or fainid her ſhe n'iſt, one of the tweie;
But well rede I that by no manir weie
Ne ſemid it as if ſhe on him rought,
Or of his painè, what ſo evir he thought.

But than yfelt this Troilus ſoche wo
That he was wel nigh wode; for aie his drede
Was this, that ſhe ſome wight had lovid ſo
That ner of him ſhe would han takin hede,
For whiche him thought he felte his hertè blede;
Ne of his wo ne durſt he nought begin
To tellin her for all this worlde to win. 504

But whan he had a ſpace left from his care
Thus to himſelf full oft he gan to plain;
He ſaied, O fole! now art thou in the ſnare
That whilom japediſt at lov'is pain;
Now art thou hent, now gnaw thin ownè chain:
Thou wert aie woned eche lovir reprehende
Of thing fro which thou canſt nat the defende. 511

What woll now every lovir faine of the
If this be wiſt? but er in thine abſence
Laughin in ſcorne, and ſain, Lo! there goth he;
That is the man of ſo grete ſapience,
That helde us lovirs leſte in reverence:
Now thanked be God he maie gon on the daunce
Of 'hem that Love liſte febly to avaunce: 518

But o thou wofull Troilus! God would
(Sithe thou muſt lovin through thy deſtine)
That thou beſet wer of ſoche one that ſhould
Know all thy wo, all lackid her pite!
But all ſo colde in love towardis the
Thy ladie is as froſt in wintir mone,
And thou fordon as ſnowe in fire is ſone. 525

God would I were arivid in the port
Of deth, to whiche my sorowe woll me lede!
Ah, Lorde! to me it were a grete comfort,
Than were I quite of languishing in drede,
For by my hidde sorowe iblowe in brede
I shall bejapid ben a thousande time
More than that fole of whose foly men rime.

But now helpe God, and ye my swete, for whom
I plaine; icought ye nevir wight so fast:
O mercie, my dere herte! and helpe me from
The deth, for I while that my life maie last
More than my life woll love you to my last;
And with some frendly loke gladith me, swete!
Though nevir nothing more ye me behete.

These wordis and full many' an othir mo
He spake, and callid evir in his pleinte
Her name, to tellin unto her his wo,
Till nigh that he in salte teris was dreinte:
All was for nought; she herd nat his compleinte;
And whan that he bethought on that folie
A thousand folde his wo gan multiplie.

Bewailing in his chambir thus alone
A frende of his, that callid was Pandare,
Came onis in unware, and herd him grone,
And sawe his frend in soche distresse and care;
Alas! (quod he) who causith all this fare?
O mercie God! what unhap maie this mene?
Han now thus sone the Grekis made you lene?

Or haſt thou ſome remorce of conſcience?
And art now fall in ſome devocioun,
And wailiſt for thy ſinne and thine offence,
And haſt for ferde ycought contricioun?
God ſave 'hem that beſiegid han our toun,
That ſo can laie our jolite on preſſe,
And bring our luſtie folke to holineſſe! 560

These wordis ſaied he for the nonis all,
That with ſoche thing he might him angry maken,
And with his angre doen his ſorowe fall
As for a time, and his corage awaken;
But well wiſt he, as ferre as tongis ſpeken,
There n'as a man of gretir hardineſſe
Than he, ne more deſirid worthineſſe. 567

What cas (quod Troïlus) or what avinture
Hath gidid the to ſene me languiſhing,
That am refuſe of evèry creture?
But for the love of God, at my praying,
Go hence awaie, for certis my dying
Woll the diſeſe, and I mote nedis deie,
Therfore go waie; there n'is no more to ſeie. 574

But if thou wene I be thus ſicke for drede
It is nat ſo, and therefore ſcorne me nought;
There is an othir thing I take of hede
Wel more than ought the Grekis han yet wrought,
Which cauſe is of my deth for ſorow and thought,
But though that I now tell it the ne leſte
Be thou nat wrothe; I hide it for the beſte. 581

This Pandare, that nigh malt for wo and routh,
Full oftin ſaied, Alas! what maie this be?
Now frende, (quod he) if evir love or trouth
Hath ben er this betwixin the and me
Ne doe thou nevir ſoche a cruilte
To hidin fro thy frende ſo grete a care;
Woſt thou not well that it am I Pandare?

I woll partake with the of all thy paine;
If it ſo be I doe the no comfort,
As it is frend'is right, ſothe for to ſaine,
To enterpartin wo as glad diſport
I have and ſhall; for true or falſe report,
In wrong and right, iloved the all my live;
Hide not thy wo from me, but tell it blive.

Than gan this ſorowfull Troîlus to ſike,
And ſaied him thus; God leve it be my beſt
To tellin the, for ſithe it maie the like
Yet woll I tell it the though my herte breſt,
And well wote I thou maieſt do me no reſt,
But leſt thou deme that I truſt nat to the:
Now herkin frende, for thus it ſtant with me.

Love, ayenſt the whiche who ſo defendith
Him ſelvin moſte him aldirleſt availeth,
With diſpeire ſo ſorely me offendith
That ſtreight unto the deth mine hert yfaileth,
Thereto deſire ſo brenningly me' aſſaileth
That to ben ſlain it were a gretir joie
To me than king of Grece to be and Troie.

Suffiſith this, my fully ſrende Pandare,
That I have ſaied, for now woteſt thou my wo,
And for the love of God my coldè care
So hide it well, I tolde it ner to mo,
For harmis mightin folowen mo than two
If it were wiſt; but be thou in gladneſſe,
And let me ſterve unknowe of my diſtreſſe.

How haſt thou thus unkindely and long
Hid this fro me, thou fole? (quod Pandarus)
Paraventure thou maieſt for ſoche one long
That mine aviſe anone maie helpin us.
This were a wondir thing, (quod Troilus)
Thou couldiſt ner in love thy ſelfin wiſſe,
How devill maieſt thou bringin me to bliſſe?

Ye, Troilus, now herkin, (quod Pandare.)
Though I be nice, it happith oftin ſo,
That one that of axis doeth full ill ſare
By gode counſaile can kepe his frend therfro;
I have my ſelf yſeine a blinde man go
There as he fell which that could lokin wide:
A fole maie eke a wiſe man oftin gide.

A whetſtone is no kerving inſtrument,
But yet it makith ſharpe kerving tolis;
And if thou woſt that I have aught miſwent
Eſchue thou that, for ſoche thing to ſchole is,
Thus oftin wiſe men ben warin by ſolis:
If thou ſo do thy wit is well bewared;
By his contrary is every thing declared.

For how might evir ſwetneſſe have be know
To him that nevir taſtid bittirneſſe?
No man ne wot what gladneſſe is I trowe
That nevir was in ſorowe' or ſome diſtreſſe;
Eke white by black, by ſhame eke worthines;
Eche ſet by othir more for othir ſemeth,
As men maie ſene, and ſo the wiſe it demeth. 644

Sithe thus of two contraries is o lore,
I that in love ſo oftin have aſſayed
Grevauncis ought to connin well the more
Counſailin the of that thou art diſmaied,
And eke the ne ought not ben ill apaied
Though I deſirin with the for to bere
Thine hevie charge; it ſhall the laſſe the dere. 651

I wote well that it ſarid thus by me
As to my brothir Paris an heirdeſſe
Whiche that yclepid was Oenone
Wrote in a complaint of her hevineſſe;
Ye ſawe the lettir that ſhe wrote I geſſe.
Naie, nevir yet iwis (quod Troilus.)
Now (quod Pandare) herkinith, it was thus. 658

Phœbus, that firſt found art of medicine,
(Quod ſhe) and coud in every wight'is care
Remedy' and rede by herbis he knewe fine,
Yet to himſelf his conning was full bare,
For love had him ſo boundin in a ſnare,
All for the doughter of the King Admete,
That all his craft ne coud his ſorowe bete. 665

Right so fare I; unhappily for me
I love one best, and that me smertith sore,
And yet paravinture I can rede the
And nat my self; repreve thou me no more,
I have no cause I wote well for to sore
As doeth an hauke that listith for to plaie,
But to thine helpe yet somwhat can I saie. 672

And of o thing right sikir maiest thou be,
That certain for to dyin in the pain
That I shall nevir mo discovir the,
Ne by my trouth I kepe nat to restrain
The fro thy love, although it were Helein,
That is thy brothir's wife, if I it wist,
Be what she be, and love her as the list. 679

Therefore as frendfulliche in me assure,
And tell me platte what is thine enchefon
And finall cause of wo that ye endure,
For doubtith nothing mine entencion
N'as nat to you of reprehension
To speke as now, for no wight maie bireve
A man to love till that him list to leve. 686

And therefore wetith wel that both ben vicis,
Mistrustin all or ellis all beleve;
But well I wote the mene of it no vice is,
As for to trustin some wight is a preve
Of trouth, and forthy would I fain remeve
Thy wrong conceipt, and do the some wight trust
Thy wo to tell, and tell me if the lust. 693

The wiſe ſaieth, Wo is him that is alone,
For and he fall he hath none helpe to riſe;
And ſithe thou haſt a ſelowe tell thy mone,
For this ne is nought certain the next wiſe
To winnin love, as techin us the wiſe,
To waile and wepe as Niobe the quene,
Whoſe teris yet in marble ben iſene.

Let be thy weping and thy drerineſſe,
And let us leſſin wo with othir ſpeche,
So maie thy wofull time ſemin the leſſe;
Delitith nought in wo thy wo to ſeche,
As doen theſe folis that ther ſorowes eche
With ſorowe whan thei han miſavinture,
And luſtin nought to ſechin othir cure.

Men ſaine, *To wretche is conſolacion*
To have an othir felowe in his paine;
That ought well to ben our opinion,
For we bothe thou and I of love do plain;
So full of ſorowe am I, ſothe to ſaine,
That certainly as now no more hard grace
Maie ſit on me; for why? there is no ſpace.

Yf God wol thou art nought agaſt of me
Leſt I would of thy lady the begile;
Thou woſt thy ſelf whom that I love parde,
As I beſt can, gon ſithin longè while,
And ſithe thou woſt I do it for no wile,
And ſithe I am he that thou truſtith moſt,
Tel me somwhat, ſens al my wo thou woſte.

Yet Troilus for al this no worde ſaide,
But long he laie as ſtill as he ded were,
And aftir this with ſiking he abraide,
And to Pandarus voice he lent his ere,
And up his eien caſt he; and than in fere
Was Pandarus leſte that in a frenſeye
He ſhould yfal, or ellis ſonè deye; 728

And ſaid, Awake, full wondirliche and ſharpe;
What ſlombriſt thou as in a lethargy?
Or art thou like an aſſe unto the harpe,
That herith ſoun, whan men the ſtringis ply,
But in his mind of that no melodie
Maie ſinkin him to gladin, for that he
So dull is in his beſtialite? 735

And with this Pandare of his wordis ſtent,
But Troilus to him no thing anſwerde;
For why? to tellin was nought his entent
Ner to no man for whom that he ſo ferde,
For it is ſaid, *Men makin ofte a yerde*
With which the makir is himſelfe ibeten
In ſondrie manir, as theſe wiſe men treten. 742

And namèliche in his counſaile telling
That touchith love, that ought to ben ſecre,
For of himſelfe it woll inough out ſpring,
But if that it the bet governid be;
Eke ſomtime it is crafte to ſeme to fle
Fro thing which in effecte men huntin faſte:
Al this gan Troilus in his herte caſte. 749

But nathèlesse whan he had herde him crie
Awake, he gan to sikè wondir sore,
And sayd, My frende, although that still I lie
I n'am not defe; now pece, and crie no more,
For I have herde thy wordis and thy lore,
But suffir me my fortune to bewailen,
For thy proverbis may nought me availen; 756

Nor othir cure ne canst thou none for me,
Eke I n'il not ben curid; I woll die:
What knowin I of the Quene Niobe?
Let be thine olde ensamplis, I the prey.
No, frende, (quod Pandarus) therfore I sey
Suche is delite of folis to bewepe
Ther wo, but to sekin bote thei ne kepe. 763

Now know I that there reson in the faileth;
But tellith me, if I wiste what she were
For whome that the al misavinture aileth
Durste thou trust that I tolde it in her ere
Thy wo, sith thou darst not thy selfe for fere,
And her besought on the to han some routhe?
Why nay, (quod he) by God and by my trouthe. 770

What! not as besily (quod Pandarus)
As though mine ownè life lay in this nede?
Why no, parde, Sir, (quod this Troilus.)
And why? For that thou shouldist nevir spede.
Wost thou that well? Ye, that is out of drede,
(Quod Troilus) for all that er ye conne
She wol to no suche wretche as I be wonne. 777

(Quod Pandarus) Alas! what may this be
That thou dispairid art thus causilesse?
What! liveth nat thy lady? *Benedicite!*
How wost thou so that thou art gracilesse?
Suche evil is not alwaie botèlesse;
Why put not thus impossible thy cure,
Sithe thing to come is ofte in aventure?

I grauntin well that thou endurist wo
As sharpe as doth he Tityus in hell,
Whose stomake foulis tirin evir mo
That hightin Vulturis, as bokis tell;
But I may not endurin that thou dwell
In so unskilful an opinion
That of thy wo n'is no curacion;

But onis n'ilt thou for thy cowarde herte,
And for thine ire and folish wilfulnesse,
For wantrust tellin of thy sorowe' smerte,
Ne to thine ownè helpe do besinesse
As moche as speke a worde ye more or lesse,
But liest as he that of life nothing retche:
What woman living coude love suche a wretche?

What may she demin othir of thy dethe,
Yf thou thus die, and she n'ot why it is,
But that for fere is yoldin up thy brethe
For Grekis han besiegid us iwis?
Lord! which a thanke shalt thou have than of this!
Thus wol she saine, and al the toune atones,
The wretch is ded, the divel have his bones!

Thou maiste alone here wepe, and crie, and knele,
And love a woman that she wote it nought,
And she wol quite it that thou shalt not fele,
Unknow unkist, and lost that is unsought.
What! many a man hath love ful dere abought
Twenty wintir that his lady ne wiste,
That never yet his ladie's mouthe he kiste.

What! should he therfore fallin in dispaire,
Or be recreaunte for his ownè tene,
Or slain himself, all be his ladie faire?
Naie, naie; but er in one be fresh and grene,
To serve and love ay his dere hert'is quene,
And thinke it is a guerdone her to serve
A thousande folde more than he can deserve.

And of that wordè toke hede Troilus,
And thought anone what folie he was in,
And how that sothe him sayid Pandarus,
That for to slaen himself might he not win,
But bothe to doen unmanhode and a sinne,
And of his deth his ladie nought to wite,
For of his wo God wot she knewe full lite.

And with that thought he gan ful sore to sike,
And saied, Alas! what is me best to doe?
To whom Pandare answerid, If the like
The best is that thou tell me all thy wo,
And have my trouth but if thou find it so,
I be thy bote or that it ben full long
To pecis doe me drawe and sithin hong.

Ye, ſo ſaieſt thou, (quod Troilus) alas!
But God wot it is naught, the rathir ſo
Full harde it were to helpin in this caas,
For well finde I that Fortune is my fo,
Ne all the men that ridin con or go
Maie of her cruill whele the harme withſtond,
For as her liſt ſhe plaieth with fre and bond.

(Quod Pandarus) Than blamiſt thou Fortune
For thou art wroth ye now at erſt I ſe;
Woſt thou not wel that Fortune is commune
To every manir wight in ſome degre?
And yet thou haſt this comfort, lo! parde,
That as her joyis motin ovirgone
So mote her ſorowes paſſin everichone.

For if her whele ſtint any thing to tourne
Than ceſſith ſhe Fortune anone to be;
Now ſith her whele by no waie maie ſojourn
What woſt thou of her mutabilite?
Right as thy ſelf luſt ſhe woll done by the,
Or that ſhe be nought ferre fro thine helping,
Paravinture thou haſt cauſe for to ſing.

And therfore woſt thou what I the beſeche?
Let be thy wo and tourning to the grounde,
For who ſo liſte have heling of his leche
To him bihovith firſt unwrie his wounde;
To Cerberus in hell aie be I bound,
Were it eke for my ſuſtir all thy ſorowe,
By my gode will ſhe ſhould be thine to morowe.

Loke up I ſaie, and tell me what ſhe is
Anone, that I maie gone about thy nede.
Know I her aught? for my love tell me this,
Than would I hope the rathir for to ſpede.
Tho gan the veine of Troilus to blede,
For he was hit, and woxe all redde for ſhame.
Aha! (quod Pandare) here beginnith game. 868

And with that worde he gan him for to ſhake,
And ſaied him thus; Theſe, thou ſhalt her name tell:
But tho gan ſely Troilus for to quake,
As though men ſhould han had him into hel,
And ſaied, Alas! of all my wo the well
Than is my ſwetè ſoe callid Creſeide;
And well nigh with that word for fere he deide. 875

And whan that Pandare herd her namè neven,
Lorde! he was glad, and ſayid, Frend ſo dere,
Now fare a right, for Jov'is name in heven
Love hath beſet the well: be of gode chere,
For of gode name, and wiſedom, and manere,
She hath inough, and eke of gentillneſſe:
If ſhe be faire thou woſt thy ſelf I geſſe. 882

Ne nevir ſeie I a more bounteous
Of her eſtate, ne gladdir, ne of ſpeche
A frendlier, ne none more gracious
For to doe well, ne laſſe had nede to ſeche
What for to doen, and all this bet to eche
In honour to as ferre as ſhe may ſtretche:
A king'is herte ſemith by her's a wretche. 889

And forthy loke of gode comforte thou be,
For certainly the firstè pointe is this
Of noble corage, and wele ordaine the
A man to have pece with himselfe iwis;
So oughtist thou, for nought but gode it is
To lovin wel and in a worthy place;
The ought not to clepin it happe but grace.

And also thinke, and therwith gladdin the,
That sith thy lady vertuous is all,
So foloweth it that there is some pite
Amongis all these othir in generall,
And for thei se that thou in speciall
Requirist nought that is ayen her name,
For Vertue stretchith not himselfe to shame.

But wel is me that evir I was borne
That thou beset art in so gode a place,
For by my trouth in love I durst have sworne
The should nevir have tidde so faire a grace;
And wost you why? for thou were wont to chace
At Love in scorne, and for dispite him call
Saint Idiote, lorde of these folis all.

How oftin hast thou madin thy nice japes?
And saied that Lov'is servauntes everichone
Of nicete ben very godd'is apes,
And some of them would monche ther mete alone
Ligging a bedde, and make 'hem for to grone,
And some thou saidist had a blaunche fevere,
And praidist God thei should nevir kevere:

And some of 'hem toke on 'hem for the cold
More than inough; so saidist thou full oft,
And some han fainid oftin time, and tolde
How that thei wakin whan thei slepin soft,
And thus thei would have set 'hem self aloft,
And nathèlesse were undir at the laste:
Thus saidist thou, and japidist full faste.

Yet saidist thou that for the morè part
These lovirs wouldin speke in generall,
And thoughtin that it was a sikir art
For failing for to' assayin ovir all:
Now maie I jape of the if that I shall;
But nathèlesse although that I should deie
Thou ne art none of tho I dare well seie.

Now bete thy brest, and saie to god of Love,
Thy grace, o Lord! for now I me repent
If I misspake, for now my self I love;
Thus saie with all thine hert in gode entént.
(Quod Troilus) Ah, Lorde! I me consent,
And praie to the my japis thou foryeve,
And I no more will jape while that I live.

Thou saiest well, (quod Pandare) and now I hope
That thou the godd'is wrath hast al apesed;
And sithin thou hast weptin many' a drope,
And said soch thing wherwith thy god is plesed,
Now would God nevir but that thou were esed,
And thinke well she of whom rest all thy wo
Hereaftir maie thy comfort ben also.

For thilke ground that berith the wedis wicke
Bereth eke theſe wholſome herbis as full oft,
And nexte to the ſoule nettle rough and thicke
The roſe ywexith ſote, and ſmothe, and ſoft,
And next the valey is the hill aloft,
And next the derkè night is the glad morowe,
And alſo joie is next the fine of ſorowe.

Now loke that well attempre be thy bridell,
And for the beſt aie ſuffre to the tide,
Or ellis all our labour is on idell:
He haſtith well that wiſely can abide.
Be diligent and true, and aie well hide:
Be luſtie, fre: perſever in ſerviſe,
And all is well if thou werke in this wiſe:

But he that partid is in every place
Is no where whole, as writin clerkis wiſe;
What wondir is if ſoche one have no grace?
Eke woſt thou how it fareth of ſome ſerviſe?
As plant a tre or herbe in ſondrie wiſe,
And on the morowe pull it up as blive,
No wondir is though it maie nevir thrive.

And ſith the god of Love hath the beſtowed
In place digne unto thy worthineſſe,
Stonde faſt, for to a gode port haſt thou rowed,
And of thy ſelf for any hevineſſe
Hope alwaie well; for but if drerineſſe
Or ovirhaſt doe our bothe labour ſhende
I hope of this to makin a gode ende.

And wost thou why? I am the lasse afered
Of this matter with my nece for to trete,
For this have I herd saie of wise and lered,
Was nevir man or woman yet beyete
That was unapt to suffre lov'is hete
Celestiall, or ellis love of kinde;
Forthy some grace I hope in her to finde.

And for to speke of her in speciall,
Her beaute to bethinkin and her youthe,
It sit her nought to ben celestiall
As yet, though that her bothè list and kouthe;
And truily it sit her well right nouthe
A worthie knight to lovin and cherice,
And but she doe I holde it for a vice.

Wherfore I am and woll be aie redy
To painin me to do you this service,
For bothe of you to plesin; this hope I
Hereaftirwardis, for ye ben bothe wise,
And connin counsaile kepe in soche a wise
That no man shall the wisir of it be;
And so we maie ben gladdid allè thre.

And by my trouth I have right now of the
A gode conceit in my wit as I gesse,
And what it is I woll now that thou se;
I think that sithin Love of his godenesse
Hath the convertid out of wickidnesse
That thou shalt ben the bestè post I leve
Of all his laie, and moste his foin greve.

Enſample why, ſe now theſe gretè clerkes,
That errin aldirmoſte ayen all lawe,
And ben convertid from ther wickid werkes
Through grace of God, that left 'hem to him drawe,
Than arne thei folk that han moſt God in awe,
And ſtrengiſt faithid ben I undirſtonde,
And con an errour aldirbeſt withſtonde.

When Troilus had herde Pandare aſſented
To ben his helpe in loving of Creſeide
He wext of wo, as who ſaith unturmented,
But hottir wext his love; and than he ſaide
With ſobre chere, as though his herte yplaide,
Now bliſfull Venus! helpe er that I ſterve.
Of the, Pandare, I now ſome thanke deſerve.

But, derè frende, how ſhal my wo be leſſe
Till this be done? and, gode now, tell me this,
How wolt thou ſaine of me and my diſtreſſe,
Leſt ſhe be wroth? this drede I moſt iwis,
Or wol not herin al how that it is:
Al this drede I, and eke for the manere
Of the her eme ſhe n'il no ſuche thing here.

(Quod Pandarus) Thou haſt a ful grete care
Leſt that the chorle may fal out of the mone.
Why, Lorde! I hate of the the nicè fare;
Why entremete of that thou haſt to done?
For Godd'is love I bidè the a bone;
So let me' alone, and it ſhal be thy beſt.
Why, frende, (quod he) than done right as the leſt:

But herke, Pandare, o worde, for I ne wolde
That thou in me wendiſt ſo grete folie
That to my lady I deſirin ſholde
That touchith harme or any vilanie,
For dredileſſe me were levir to die
Than ſhe of me aught ellis underſtode
But that that might yſownin into gode. 1036

Tho lough this Pandare, and anon anſwerde,
And I thy borow? fie! no wight doth but ſo:
I ne raught not although ſhe ſtode and herde
How that thou ſaieſt: but farewel, I wol go:
Adieu; be glad: God ſpede us bothè two!
Yeve me this labour and this buſineſſe
And of my ſpede be thine al the ſwetnes. 1043

Tho Troilus on knees gan doune to fall,
(And Pandare in his armis hente him faſt)
And ſaide, Nowe fie upon the Grekis all!
Yet parde God ſhal helpin at the laſt,
And dredileſſe if that my life may laſt,
And God toforne, lo! ſome of 'hem ſhal ſmerte; 1049
And yet me' athinketh that this avaunt m'aſterte.

And now, Pandare, I can no morè ſay,
But thou wiſe, thou woſt thou maiſt: thou art al;
My life, my deth, hole in thine honde I lay;
Helpe me (quod he.) Yes, by my trouth I ſhal.
God yelde the, frende, and this in ſpecial,
(Quod Troilus) that thou me recommaunde
To her that may me to the deth commaunde. 1057

This Pandarus tho, deſirous to ſerve
His ful frendè, tho ſaide in this manere;
Farwel, and thinke I wol thy thanke deſerve,
Have here my trouth, and that thou ſhalt well here:
And went his way thinking on this matere,
And how he beſt might her beſeche of grace,
And find a leſure therto and a place.

For every wight that hath a houſe to found
He rennith nat the werke for to beginne
With rakil honde, but he wol bide a ſtound,
And ſende his hert'is line out fro within,
Thus aldirfirſt his purpoſe for to winne,
As this Pandarus in his hert'is thought
Did caſt his werke full wiſely er he wrought.

But Troilus lay tho no lengir doun,
But up anon gat upon his ſtede baie,
And in the felde he playid the lioun;
Wo was that Greke that with him met that daie:
And in the toune his manir tho forthe aie
So godely was, and gat him ſo in grace,
That eche him loved that lokid in his face.

For he becamin the moſt frendly wight,
The gentiliſt, and eke the moſtè fre,
The truſtyiſt, and one the beſtè knight,
That in his time was or ellis might be:
Ded were his japis and his cruilte,
Ded his high porte and all his manir ſtraunge,
And eche of 'hem gan for a vertue chaunge.

Now let us ſtint of Troilus a ſtounde,
That farith like a man that hurt is ſore,
And is ſomdele of aking of his wounde
Yleſſid wel, but helid no dele more,
And as an eſy pacient the lore
Abite of him that goth about his cure,
And thus he drivith forth his avinture.

Explicit liber primus.

PROŒMIUM LIBRI SECUNDI.

Out of theſe blackè wawis let us ſaile,
O winde, o winde! the wedir ginnith clere,
For in the ſe the bote hath ſuche travaile
Of my conning that unneth I it ſtere:
This ſe clepe I the tempeſtous matere
Of depe diſpaire that Troilus was in;
But now of hope the kalendis begin.

O lady mine, that callid art Clio!
Thou be my ſpede fro this forthe, and my Muſe,
To rimè wel this Boke til I have do;
Me nedith here none othir art to uſe;
For why? to every lovir I me' excuſe
That of no ſentiment I this endite,
But out of Latin in my tonge it write.

Wherfore I n'il have neithir thanke ne blame
Of all this Worke, but praie you mekily
Diſblamith me if any worde be lame,
For as mine auctour ſayid ſo ſay I;
Eke though I ſpeke of love unfelingly
No wondir is, for it nothinge of newe is:
A blinde man can not judgin wel in hewis.

I know eke that in forme of ſpeche is chaunge
Within a thouſande yere, and wordis tho
That haddin priſe now wondir nice and ſtraunge
Us thinkith 'hem, and yet thei ſpake 'hem ſo,
And ſpedde as wel in love as men now do;
Eke for to winnin love in ſondry ages
In ſondry londis ſondry ben uſages.

And forthy if it happe in any wiſe
That here be any lovir in this place
That herkeneth, as the ſtory wol deviſe,
How Troilus came to his ladie's grace,
And thinkith ſo n'olde I not love purchace,
Or wondrith on his ſpeche or his doyng,
I n'ot, but it is to me no wondring:

For every wight whiche that to Rome ywent
Halt nat o pathe ne alway o manere;
Eke in ſome londe were al the game yſhent
Yf that men farde in love as men don here,
As thus, in opin doyng or in chere,
In viſiting, in forme, or ſaid our ſawes;
For thus men ſaine, *Eche countre hath his lawes.*

Eke ſcarſely ben there in this placè thre
That have in love ſaid likè and done in al,
For to this purpoſe this maie likin the,
And the right nought, yet al is done or ſhal;
Eke ſome men grave in tre, ſome in ſtone wal,
As it betide: but ſith I have begonne,
Mine authour ſhall I folow as I konne.

Explicit Proœmium.

INCIPIT LIBER SECUNDUS.

In May, that mothir is of monethis glade,
That the freſhe flouris all, blew, white, and rede,
Ben quicke ayen that wintir ded had made,
And full of baume is fleting every mede,
Whan that Phœbus doth his bright bemis ſpred
Right in the white Bole, right ſo it betidde,
As I ſhal ſinge, on May'is day the thridde,

That Pandarus, for all his wiſè ſpeche,
Felte eke his parte of Lov'is ſhottis kene,
That coude he ner ſo well of loving preche
It made his hewe al daie ful oftin grene;
So ſhope it that him fill that day a tene
In love for whiche in wo to bedde he went,
And made er it were day full many' a went.

The ſwalow Progne with a ſorowfull lay,
Whan morow come, gan make her waimenting
Why ſhe forſhapin was; and ever lay
Pandare abed halfe in a ſlombering,
Til ſhe ſo nigh him made her waimenting,
How Tereus gan forth her ſuſtir take,
That with the noiſe of her he gan awake,

And to call, and dreſſin him up to riſe,
Remembring him his arande was to done
From Troilus, and eke his grete empriſe,
And caſt, and knew in gode plite was the mone
To done voiage, and toke his way full ſone
Unto his nec'is paleis there beſide:
Now Janus, god of Entre, thou him gide!

Whan he was come unto his nec'is place,
Where is my lady, to her folke (quod he?)
And thei him tolde, and he forthe in gan pace,
And founde two othir ladies ſit and ſhe
Within a pavid parlour, and thei thre
Herdin a maidin 'hem redin the geſte
Of the ſiege of Thebis whilis 'hem leſte.

Madame, quod Pandare, God you ſave and ſe,
With al your boke and al the companie!
Eighe! uncle mine, welcome iwis, (quod ſhe)
And up ſhe roſe, and by the honde in hie
She toke him faſt, and ſayid, This night thrye,
To gode mote it yturne, of you I mette;
And with that word ſhe doun on benche him ſet.

Ye, nece, ye ſhullin farin wel the bet,
If God wol, al this yere, (quod Pandarus)
But I am ſory that I have you let
To herkin of your boke ye praiſin thus:
For Godd'is love what ſaith it? tel it us:
Is it of love? ſome gode ye may me lere.
Uncle, (quod ſhe) your maiſtreſſe is nat here. 98

With that thei gonnin laugh, and tho ſhe ſeide,
This romaunce is of Thebis that we rede,
And we have herd how that King Laius deide
Through Oedipus his ſonne, and all the dede;
And here we ſtintin at theſe letters rede
How the biſhop, as the boke can ytell,
Amphiorax, fill through the grounde to hell. 105

(Quod Pandarus) All this know I my ſelve,
And al th' aſſiege of Thebis and the care,
For herof ben there makid bokis twelve:
But let be this, and tell me how ye fare:
Do' way your barbe, and ſhew your facè bare;
Do' way your bokè: riſe up and let us daunce,
And let us done to May ſome obſervaunce. 112

Eighe! God forbid! (quod ſhe.) What! be ye mad?
Is that a widowe's life, ſo God you ſave?
Parde you makin me right ſore adrad;
Ye bene ſo wilde it ſemith as ye rave:
It ſat me wel bettir aie in a cave
To bide, and rede on holy ſaintis lives:
Let maidins gon to daunce and yongè wives. 119

As evir thrive I (quod this Pandarus)
Yet coulde I tel a thing to don you play.
Now uncle dere (quod ſhe) tellith it us
For Godd'is love: is than th' aſſiege aweie?
I am of Grekis ferde ſo that I deie.
Nay, nay, (quod he) as evir mote I thrive
It is a thing wel bettir than ſuche five.

Ye, holy God! (quod ſhe) what thing is that?
What! bettir than ſuche five? Eighe! nay iwis
For al this world ne can I redin what
It ſhould yben: ſome jape I trowe it is;
And but your ſelvin tel us what it is
My wit is for to' arede it al to lene:
As helpe me God I n'ot what that ye mene.

And I your borow; ne ner ſhal (quod he)
This thing be tolde to you, as mote I thrive.
And why ſo, uncle mine, why ſo? (quod ſhe.)
By God (quod he) that wol I tel as blive,
For proudir woman is there none on live,
And ye it wiſte, in al the toune of Troie:
I ne jape nat, ſo evir have I joie.

Tho gan ſhe to wondrin more than before
A thouſande folde, and doune her eyin caſt,
For nevir ſithe the time that ſhe was bore
To knowin thing deſirid ſhe ſo faſt,
And with a ſike ſhe ſaid him at the laſt,
Now, uncle mine, I n'il you not diſpleſe,
Nor aſkin that that may do you diſeſe.

So aftir this with many wordis glade
And frendly talis, and with mery chere,
Of this and that thei ſpeke, and gonnin wade
In many an unkouth, glad, and depe, matere,
As frendis done whan thei ben met iſere,
Til ſhe gan aſkin him how Hector ferde,
That was the toun'is wall and Grekis yerde. 154

Ful wel, I thanke it God, ſaide Pandarus,
Save in his arme he hath a litle wounde;
And eke his freſhè brothir Troilus,
To the wiſe worthy Hector the ſecounde,
In whom that every vertue liſte habounde,
As allè trouthe and allè gentilneſſe,
Wiſedome, honour, fredome, and worthineſſe. 161

In gode faith, eme, (quod ſhe) that likith me
Thei farin wel; God ſave 'hem bothè two!
For trewliche I holde it a grete deinte
A king'is ſonne in armis wel to do,
And be of gode condicions therto,
For grete powir and moral vertue here
Is ſelde iſene in one perſone iſere. 168

In gode faith that is ſothe, (quod Pandarus)
But by my trouth the king hath ſonnis twey,
That is to mene Hector and Troilus,
That certainly though that I ſhould ydey
Thei ben as voide of vicis, dare I ſey,
As any men that livin undir ſonne;
Ther might is wide iknow and what thei conne. 175

Of Hector nedith nothing for to tel;
In all this worlde there n'is a bettir knight
Than he, that is of worthineſſe the wel,
And he wel more of vertue hath than might,
This knowith many' a wiſe and worthy knight:
And the ſame priſe of Troilus I ſey:
God helpe me ſo I know not ſuche twey. 182

Parde (quod ſhe) of Hector that is ſothe,
And of Troilus the ſame thing trowe I,
For dredileſſe men tellith that he dothe
In armis day by day ſo worthily,
And berith him here at home ſo gently
To evèry wight, that al priſe hath he
Of them that me were leviſt praiſid be. 189

Ye ſay right ſothe iwis, (quod Pandarus)
For yeſterday who ſo had with him ben
Mightin have wondrid upon Troilus,
For nevir yet ſo thicke a ſwarme of been
Ne flewe as Grekis from him gannin fleen,
And through the felde in every wight'is ere
There was no crie but Troilus is there! 196

Now here now there he huntid 'hem ſo faſt
There n'as but Grekis blode and Troilus;
Now him he hurt, and him al doun he caſt;
Aye where he went it was arrayid thus:
He was ther deth, and ſhelde and life for us,
That as that day ther durſt him none withſtonde
While that he helde his blody ſwerde in honde. 203

Therto he is the frendilyiſt man
Of gret eſtate that er I ſawe my live,
And where him liſte the beſt felowſhip can
To ſuche as him thinkith able to thrive.
And with that word tho Pandarus as blive
He toke his leve, and ſaid I wol gon hen.
Nay, blame have I, myne uncle, (quod ſhe) then.

What eilith you to be thus wery ſone,
And namiliche of women wol ye ſo?
Naie, ſittith doune; parde I have to done
With you to ſpeke of wiſdome er ye go;
And every wight that was about 'hem tho
That herdè that gan ferre awaie to ſtonde.
While thei two had al that 'hem liſte in honde.

Whan that her tale al brought was to an ende
Of her eſtate and of her governaunce,
(Quod Pandarus) Now time is that I wende,
But yet I ſay Ariſith, let us daunce
And caſte your widowe's habite to miſchaunce;
What liſte you thus your ſelfe to disfigure,
Sithe you is tidde ſo glad an avinture?

But wel bethought; for love of God (quod ſhe)
Shal I nat wetin what ye mene of this?
No, this thing aſkith leſir tho (quod he)
And eke it me would full muche greve iwis
If I it tolde and ye it toke amis:
Yet were it bette my tonge to holdin ſtil
Than ſay a ſothe that were ayenſt your wil.

For, necè myne, by the goddesse Minerve,
And Jupiter, that makith the thonde'ring,
And by the blisful Venus that I serve,
Ye ben the woman in this world living,
Withoutin paramours, to my weting,
That I best love, and lothist am to greve,
And that ye wetin wel your selfe I leve.

Iwis, mine uncle, (quod she) graunt mercy!
Your frendship have I foundin evir yet;
I am to no man beholdin trewly
So muche as you, and have so litil quit;
And with the grace of God emforth my wit
As in my gilte I shal you ner offende,
And if I have er this I wol amende.

But for the love of God I you beseche,
As ye be he that I love most and triste,
Let be to me your fremid manir speche,
And saie to me your nece what so you list.
And with that worde her uncle' anon her kist,
And sayid, Gladly, my leve nece so dere!
Take it for gode that I shal say you here.

With that she gan her eyin doune to caste,
And Pandarus to coughe began a lite,
And sayid, Nece, alway, lo! to the laste,
How so it be that some men 'hem delite
With subtil art ther talis for t' endite,
Yet for al that in ther entencion
Ther tale is all for some conclusion.

And ſithe the end is every tal'is ſtrength,
And this matir is ſo behovily,
What ſhould I paint or drawin it on length
To you that ben my frende ſo faithfully?
And with that worde he gan right inwardly
Beholdin her, and lokin in her face,
And ſaide, On ſuche a mirrour muche gode grace! 266

Than thought he thus, if I my tale endite
Ought harde, or make a proceſſe any while,
She ſhal no ſavour have therin but lite,
And trowe I would her in my wil begile,
For tendir wittis wenin al be wile
Wher as thei con nat plainliche undirſtond;
Forthy her wit to ſounin wol I fonde; 273

And lokid on her in a beſy wiſe,
And ſhe was ware that he behelde her ſo:
Ah, Lorde! (quod ſhe) ſo faſte ye me aviſe,
Sawe ye me ner er now? what, ſay ye no?
Yes, yes, (quod he) and bet wol er I go;
But by my trouth I thoughtin nowe if ye
Be fortunate, for now men ſhal it ſe. 280

For every wight ſome godely avinture
Somtime is ſhape, if he it can receive,
But if that he n'il take of it no cure
When that it cometh, but wilfully it weive,
Lo, neither caſe nor Fortune him deceive,
But right his ownè ſlouth and wretchidneſſe;
And ſuche a wight is for to blame I geſſe. 287

Gode avinture, o bellè nece! have ye
Ful lightly foundin, and ye conne it take;
And for the love of God and eke of me
Catche it anone, leſt avinture yſlake:
What ſhould I lengir proceſſe of it make?
Yeve me your hond, for in this world is none,
If that you liſt, a wight ſo wel begon.

And ſithe I ſpeke of gode entencioun,
As I to you have tolde wel here beforne,
And love as wel your honour and renoun
As any creture in the worlde iborne,
By al the othis that I have you ſworne
And ye be wrothe therfore, or wene I lie,
Ne ſhal I never ſene you efte with eie.

Beth nat agaſte, ne quakith nat; wherto?
Ne chaungith nat for ferè ſo your hewe,
For hardily the worſt of this is do;
And though my tale as now be to you newe,
Yet truſt alwaie ye ſhal me findin trewe;
And were it thing that me thought unfitting
To you ne would I no ſuch talis bring.

Nowe, my gode eme, for Godd'is love I pray
(Quod ſhe) come of and tel me what it is,
For bothe I am agaſt what ye wol ſay,
And eke me longith it to wit iwis,
For whethir it be wel or be amis
Say on; let me not in this fere ydwel.
So wol I done: now herkenith I ſhal tel.

Now necè mine, the king'is owne dere ſonne,
The gode, the wiſe, the worthy, freſh and fre,
Whiche alway for to done wel is his wonne,
The noble Troilus, ſo lovith the
That but ye helpe it wol his bane ybe.
Lo! here is al: what ſhouldin I more ſey?
Doth what you liſt to make him live or dey. 322

But if ye let him dye I wol ſtervin,
Have here my trouthè, nece, I n'il not lien,
Al ſhould I with this knife my throte kervin:
With that the teris burſt out of his eyen,
And ſaide, If that ye done us both to dien
Thus giltileſſe, than have ye fiſhid faire;
What mendeth it you though that we both apaire? 329

Alas! he whiche that is my lorde ſo dere,
That trewè man, that noble gentle knight,
That naught deſirith but your frendly chere,
I ſe him dyin, there he goth upright,
And haſtith him with al his fullè might
For to ben ſlaine, if his fortune aſſente:
Alas that God you ſuche a beaute ſente! 336

If it be ſo that ye ſo cruil be
That of his deth you liſtith nought to retch,
That is ſo trewe and worthy as we ſe,
No more than of a japir or a wretch,
If ye be ſuche, your beaute may nat ſtretch
To make amendes of ſo cruill a dede;
Aviſèment is gode before the nede. 343

Wo worthe the faire gemme that is vertulesse!
Wo worthe that herbe also that doth no bote!
Wo worth the beaute that is routhèlesse!
Wo worth that wight that trede eche undir fote!
And ye that ben of beaute croppe and rote,
If therwithal in you ne be no routhe
Than is it harme ye livin, by my trouthe.

And also thinke wel that this is no gaude,
For me were levir thou, and I, and he,
Were hongid than that I should ben his baude,
As high as men might on us al ise:
I am thine eme; the shame were unto me
As wel as the if that I should assent
Through mine abet that he thine honour shent.

Now undirstonde, for I you nought require
To binde you to him thorough no behest
Save one, that ye makin him bettir chere
Than ye han don er this and more feste,
So that his life be savid at the leste.
This al and some is plainly our entente:
God helpe me so I nevir othir mente.

Lo! this request is nought but skil iwis,
Ne doute of reson parde is there none:
I set the worst that ye dredin; this is,
Men would wondir to sene him come and gone:
Ther ayenist answere I thus anone,
That every wight, but he be fole of kinde,
Wol deme it love of frendship in his minde.

What! who wol demin though he se a man
To temple gon that he th' imagis eteth?
Thinke eke howe wel and wisely that he can
Governe himselfe, that he nothing foryeteth,
That wher he cometh he pris and thonk him geteth;
And eke therto he shal come here so selde
What force were it though all the toun behelde?

Suche love of frendes reignith in al this toun:
And wrie you in that mantil evirmo;
And God so wis be my salvacioun
As I have saide your best is to do so.
But, gode nece, alway for to stint his wo
So let your daungir sugrid ben alite
That of his deth ye be not al to wite.

Creseidè, which that herde him in this wise,
Thought I shal fele what he menith iwis.
Now eme, (quod she) what wouldin ye devise?
What is your rede that I should done of this?
That is wel said, quod he: certaine best is
That ye him love aien for his loving,
As love for love is skilful guerdoning.

Thinke eke how elde wastith evèry hour
In eche of you a part of your beaute,
And therfore er that age doth the devour
Go love, for olde there woll no wight love the.
Let this proverbe a lore unto you be,
To late iware, quod Beaute, whan it paste,
And elde ydauntith daungir at the laste.

The king'is fole is wont to crie aloude,
Whan that he thinketh a woman bereth her hie,
So longè mote ye livin, and all proude,
Til crow'is fete growin undir your eie,
And sende you than a mirrour in to prie
In which that ye may se your face a morrowe:
Nece, I bid him wishin you no more sorowe.

With this he stinte, and cast adoune the hed,
And she began to brest and wepe anone,
And saide, Alas for wo! why n'ere I ded?
For of this world the faith it al agone:
Alas! what shuldin straunge unto me done
When he that for my bestè frende I wende
Redith me love who shulde it me defende?

Alas! I would have trustid doutiles
That if that I through my disavinture
Had lovid eithir him or Achilles,
Hector, or any othir manir creture,
Ye n'old have had no mercy ne mesure
On me, but alwaie had me in repreve:
This false worlde, alas! who may it leve?

What! is this al the joy and al the fest?
Is this your rede? is this my blisful caas?
Is this the very mede of your behest?
Is this al paintid processe said (alas!)
Right for this fine? O lady mine Pallas,
Thou in this dredeful case for me purvey,
For so astonied am I that I dey.

With that she gan ful sorowfully to sike:
Ah! may it be no bet? (Quod Pandarus)
By God I shall no more come here this weke,
And God to-forne, that am mistrustid thus;
I se wel now ye settin lite of us
Or of our deth, alas! I, woful wretche,
Might he yet live of me were nought to retche. 434

O cruil god of Deth, dispitous Marte!
O Furies thre of hel! on you I crie,
So let me ner out of this house departe
Yf that I ment or harme or vilanie;
But sithe I se my lorde mote nedis die,
And I with him, here I me shrive, and sey,
That wickidly ye done us bothe to dey. 441

But sithe it likith you that I be ded,
By Neptunus, that god is of the Se,
Fro this forthe shal I nevir etin bred
Til that I mine own hert'is blode maie se,
For certaine I wol die as sone as he:
And up he sterte, and on his way he raught,
Til she againe him by the lappe ycaught. 448

Creseidè, which that wel nigh starfe for fere,
So as she was aye the most ferefull wight
That mightin be, and herde eke with her ere,
And sawe the sorowful ernest of the knight,
And in his prayir sawe eke non unright,
And for the harme eke that might fallin more,
She gan to rewe, and dredde her wondir sore: 455

And thus ſhe thought; unhappis fallin thicke
Al day for love, and in ſuche manir caas
As men ben cruill in 'hem ſelfe and wicke;
And if this man ſle here himſelfe, alas!
In my preſence, it n'il be no ſolas:
What men would of it deme I can nat ſay;
It nedith me full ſlighly for to play. 462

And with a ſorowful ſighe ſhe ſaide thrie,
Ah, Lorde! me is betidde a ſory chaunce,
For mine eſtate lieth in a jeopardie,
And eke mine em'is life lieth in balaunce;
But nathèleſſe with Godd'is govirnaunce
I ſhal ſo done mine honour ſhal I kepe,
And eke his life, and ſtintin for to wepe. 469

Of harmis two the leſſe is for to cheſe;
Yet had I levir makin him gode chere
In honour than mine em'is life to leſe;
Ye ſaine ye nothing ellis me requere.
No, wis, (quod he) mine owne nece ſo dere!
Now wel, (quod ſhe) and I wol don my paine;
I ſhal mine herte ayen my luſt conſtraine. 476

But that I n'il nat holdin him in honde,
Ne love a man, that can I naught ne may,
Ayenſt my wil, but ellis wol I fonde,
Mine honour ſave, pleſe him fro day to day;
Therto n'olde I not onis have ſaide nay
But that I dredde as in my fantaſie;
But *Ceſſe cauſe and aie ceſſith maladie.* 483

But here I make a proteſtacion
That in this proceſſe if ye depir go
That certainly for no ſalvacion
Of you, though that ye ſtervin bothè two,
Though al the worlde on o day be my fo,
Ne ſhal I ner on him have othir routhe.
I graunt it wel (quod Pandare) by my trouthe. 490

But maie I truſtin well to you (quod he)
That of this thing that ye han hight me here
Ye woll it holdin truely unto me?
Ye, doutileſs, quod ſhe, myne uncle dere!
Ne that I ſhall have cauſe in this matere
(Quod he) to plain or aftir you to preche?
Why no, parde; what nedith morè ſpeche? 497

Tho fellin thei in othir talis glade,
Till at the laſt, O gode eme! (quod ſhe tho)
For love of God, whiche that us bothe ymade,
Telle me how firſt ye wiſtin of his wo;
Wot non of it but ye? He ſayid No.
Can he well ſpeke of love, (quod ſhe) I preie?
Tell me, for I the bet ſhall me purveie. 504

Tho Pandarus a litil gan to ſmile,
And ſayid, By my trouth I ſhall now tell:
This othir daie, nat gon full longè while,
Within the paleis gardin by a well
Gan he and I well halfe a daie to dwell,
Right for to ſpekin of an ordinaunce
How we the Grekis mightin diſavaunce: 511

Sone after that begone we for to lepe
And caſtin with our dartis to and fro,
Till at the laſt he ſayid he would ſlépe,
And on the graſſe adoune he laied him tho;
And I aftir gan romin to and fro,
Till that I herd, as I walkid alone,
How he began full wofully to grone.

Tho gan I ſtalke him full ſoftly behinde,
And ſikirly, the ſothè for to ſaine,
As I can clepe ayen now to my minde,
Right thus to Love he gan him for to plain:
He ſayid, Lorde, have routh upon my pain;
All havé I ben rebell in mine entent,
Now *(mea culpa)* Lorde, I me repent.

O God! that at thy diſpoſicion
Lediſt forth the fine by juſt purveiaunce
Of every wight, my lowe confeſſion
Accept in gre, and ſende me ſoche penaunce
As likith the; put from me diſperaunce,
That maie my ghoſt departe alwaie fro the:
Thou be my ſhilde for thy benignite.

For certis, Lorde, ſo ſore hath ſhe me wounded
That ſtode in blacke with loking of her eyen,
That to mine hert'is botome it is founded,
Through which I wot that I muſt nedis dien;
This is the worſt, I dare me nought bewrien,
And well the hotir ben the gledis rede
That men 'hem wrien with aſhin pale and ded.

With that he smote his hedde adoune anone,
And gan to muttre I nat what truely,
And I with that gan still awaie to gone,
And lete thereof as nothing wist had I,
And come again anon and stode him by,
And saied, Awake, ye slepin all to long;
It semith me nought that Love doth you wrong

That slepin so that no man maie you wake;
Who seie evir er this so dull a man?
Ye, frende, (quod he) doe ye your hedd'is ake
For love, and let me livin as I can:
But though that he for wo was pale and wan
Yet made he tho as freshe a countenaunce
As though he should have led the newè daunce.

This passid forth till now this othir daie
It fell that I come roming all alone
Into his chambre, and founde how that he laie
Upon his bedde; but man so sorè grone
Ne herd I nevir; and what was his mone
Ne wist I nought, for as I was comming
All sodainly he left his complaining,

Of whiche I toke somwhat suspection,
And nere I come, and founde him wepè sore;
And God so wise be my salvacion
As I had nevir routhe of nothing more,
For neithir with engine ne with no lore
Unnethis might I fro the deth him kepe,
That yet fele I mine hertè for him wepe.

And God wot nevir ſith that I was borne
Was I ſo buſie no man for to preche,
Ne nevir was to wight ſo depe yſworne,
Er he me told who might yben his leche;
But not to you reherſin al his ſpeche,
Or all his wofull wordis for to ſowne,
Ne bid me nought, but ye woll ſe me ſwone; 574

But for to ſave his life, and ellis nought,
And to non harm of you, thus am I driven;
And for the love of God that us hath wrought
Soche chere him doth that he and I maie liven.
Now have I plat to you mine herte yſhriven,
And ſith ye wote that mine entent is clene
Take hede thereof, for none evill I mene. 581

And right gode thrift I pray to God have ye
That han ſoche one icaught withoutin net;
And be ye wiſe, as ye be faire to ſe;
Well in the ring than is the rubie ſet:
There werin nevir two ſo well imet
Whan ye ben his all whole as he is your:
The mighty God us grant to ſe that hour! 588

Naie, thereof ſpake I nat. A ha! (quod ſhe)
As helpe me God ye ſhendin every dele.
A, mercie, derè nece! anon (quod he)
What ſo I ſpake I ment it nought but wele,
By Mars the god that helmid is of ſtele:
Now beth not wroth, my blode, my necè dere!
Now well (quod ſhe) foryevin be it here. 595

With this he toke his leve, and home he went:
Ye, Lorde, how he was glad and well bigon!
Creſeide aroſe, no lengir ſhe ne ſtent,
But ſtreight into her cloſet went anon,
And ſet her doune as ſtill as any ſtone,
And every worde gan up and doune to winde
That he had ſaied as it came her to minde. 602

And woxe ſomedele aſtonied in her thought
Right for the newè caſe; but whan that ſhe
Was full aviſid, tho found ſhe right nought
Of perill why that ſhe oughte aferde be,
For man mai love of poſſibilite
A woman ſo that his herte maie to breſt,
And ſhe nat love ayen but if her leſt. 609

But as ſhe ſat alone and thoughtè thus,
In field aroſe a ſkirmiſh all without,
And men cried in the ſtrete, Se! Troilus
Hath right now put to flight the Grekis rout:
With that gonne all her meine for to ſhout,
A! go we ſe; caſt up the gatis wide,
For through this ſtrete he mote to paleis ride, 616

For othir waie is fro the yatis none
Of Dardanus, there opin is the cheine:
With that come he and all his folke anone
An eſie pace riding in routis tweine,
Right as his happie daie was (ſothe to ſeine)
For whiche men ſaith maie not diſtourbid be
That ſhall betidin of neceſſite. 623

This Troilus ſat on his baiè ſtede
All armid ſave his hedde full richily,
And woundid was his horſe, and gan to blede,
On whiche he rode a pace full ſoftily;
But ſoche a knightly ſight, lo! truily
As was on him was nat withoutin faile
To loke on Mars, that god is of Battaile. 630

So like a man of armis and a knight
He was to ſene, fulfilled of high proweſſe,
For bothe he had a bodie and a might
To doen that thing as well as hardineſſe,
And eke to ſene him in his gerè dreſſe,
So freſhe, ſo yong, ſo weldy, ſemid he,
It was an hevin on him for to ſe. 637

His helme to hewin was in twentie places,
That by a tiſſue hong his backe behinde,
His ſhelde to daſhed with ſwerdis and with maces,
In whiche men might many an arowe finde
That thirlid had both horne, and nerſe, and rinde;
And aie the peple cried, Here cometh our joie,
And next his brothir holdir up of Troie! 644

For which he wext a little redde for ſhame
When he ſo herd the peple on him crien,
That to beholde it was a noble game
How ſobirliche he caſt adoune his eyen.
Creſeide anone gan all his chere eſpien,
And let it in her herte ſo ſoftly ſinke
That to her ſelf ſhe ſayed, Ho! give me drinke. 651

For of her ownè thought she woxe al redde,
Remembring her right thus, lo! this is he
Whiche that mine uncle swereth he mote be dedde
But I on him have mercie and pite:
And with that ilkè thought for pure shame she
Gan in her hedde to pull, and that as fast,
While he and all the peple forth by past:

And gan to cast and rollin up and doun
Within her thought his excellent prowesse,
And his estate, and also his renoun,
His witte, his shape, and eke his gentilnesse;
But moste her favour was for his distresse
Was all for her, and thought it were a routh
To slaen soche one, if that he mentè trouth.

Now might some envious wight janglin thus,
This was a sodain love; how might it be
That she so lightly lovid Troilus?
Right at the first sight of him? Yea, parde.
Now whoso saied so mote he nevir the,
For every thing a ginning hath it nede
Er all be wrought withoutin any drede.

For I saie nat that she so sodainly
Yafe him her love, but that she gan encline
To liken' him tho, and I have told you why;
And aftir that his manhode and his pine
Made love within her hertè for to mine,
For whiche by processe and by gode service
He wanne her love, and in no sodain wise.

And also blisful Venus wele arayed
Satte in her sevinth house of hevin tho
Disposid wele, and with aspectis payed,
To helpin sely Troylus of his wo;
And, sothe to sayne, she n'as nat all a foe
To Troylus in hys natyvyte,
God wote that wele the sonir spedin he. 686

Now let us stinte of Troilus a throwe,
That ridith forth, and let us tournè fast
Unto Creseide, that heng her hedde full lowe
There as she satte alone, and gan to cast
Wheron she would apoinct her at the last,
If it so were her eme ne would ycesse
For Troilus upon her for to presse. 693

And, Lorde! so she gan in her thought argue
In this matter of whiche I have you told,
And what to doen best were, and what eschue,
That plitid she ful oft in many fold;
Now was her hertè warme now was it cold;
And what she thought of somwhat shal I write
As mine aucthour listith to me t' endite. 700

She thought wele first that Troilus person
She knewe by sight, and eke his gentilnesse,
And thus she said, All were it nought to doen
To graunt hĩm love, yet for his worthinesse
It wer honor with plaie and with gladnesse
In honeste with suche a lorde to dele
For mine estate and also for his hele. 707

Eke well wote I my king'is sonne is he,
And sith he hath to se me soche delite,
If I would uttirliche his sight yflie
Par'aventure he might have me in dispite,
Thorough whiche I might stondin in worse plite;
Now were I not wise me hate to purchace,
Withoutin nede, there I maie stand in grace. 714

In every thing I wot there lieth mesure;
For though a man forbiddith dronkinesse,
He nought forbiddith that every creture
Be drinkilesse for alwaie, as I gesse;
Eke sithe I wot for me is his distresse
I ne ought not for that thing him dispise,
Sith it is so he menith in gode wise. 721

And eke I knowe of longè time agone
His thewis gode, and that he n'is not nice,
No vantour saine men certain he is none,
To wise is he to doen so grete a vice,
Ne als I n'ill him nevir so cherice
That he shall make avaunt by justè cause;
He shall me nevir binde in soche a clause. 728

Now set a case, the hardist is iwis,
Men mightin demin that he lovith me;
What dishonour were it unto me this?
Maie I him let of that? why naie, parde;
I knowe also, and alwaie here and se,
Men lovin women al this toune about;
Be thei the wers? why naie, withoutin doubt. 735

I thinke eke how he worthy is to have
Of all this noble toune the thriftyist
That woman is, if ſhe her honour ſave,
For out and out he is the worthyiſt
Save only Hector, whiche that is the beſt;
And yet his life lieth all now in my cure:
But ſoche is love, and eke mine avinture. 742

Ne me to love a wondir is it nought,
For well wote I my ſelf, ſo God me ſpede,
All woll I that no man wiſt of this thought,
I am one of the fairiſt out of drede,
And godelyiſt, who ſo that takith hede,
And ſo men ſaine, in all the toune of Troie;
What wondir is though he of me have joie? 749

I am mine ownè woman, well at eſe,
I thanke it God, as aftir mine eſtate,
Right yong, and ſtond untied in luſtie leſe,
Withoutin jelouſie, and ſoche debate;
Shall no huſbonde faine unto me Checke mate,
For eithir thei ben full of jelouſie,
Or maiſtirfull, or lovin novelrie. 756

What ſhall I doen? to what fine live I thus?
Shall I not love in caſe if that me leſt?
What? pardieux I am not religious;
And though that I mine hertè ſet at reſt
Upon this knight, that is the worthieſt,
And kepe alwaie mine honor and my name,
By all right it maie doe to me no ſhame. 763

But right as whan the ſunnè ſhinith bright
In March, that chaungith oftintime his face,
And that a cloud is put with winde to flight
Whiche ovirſprat the ſunne as for a ſpace,
A cloudy thought gan through her ſoulè pace
That ovirſpradde her brightè thoughtis all,
So that for fere almoſte ſhe gan to fall.

That thought was this; Alas! ſith I am fre
Should I now love and put in jeopardie
My ſikirneſſe, and thrallin liberte?
Alas! how durſt I thinkin that folie?
Maie I not well in othir folke aſpie
Ther dredfull joie, ther conſtreint and ther pain?
Ther lovith non that ne hath why to plain.

For love is yet the moſtè ſtormie life
Right of himſelf that evir was begonne,
For ever ſome miſtruſt or ſome nice ſtrife
There is in love, ſome cloud ovir the ſunne;
Therto we wretchid women nothing conne
Whan us is wo but wepe, and ſit, and thinke:
Our wretche is this, our ownè wo to drinke.

Alſo theſe wickid tonguis ben ſo preſt
To ſpeke us harme, eke men ben ſo untrue,
That right anon as ceſſid is ther leſt
So ceſſith love, and forth to love anewe:
But *Harme idoe is doen, who ſo it rue;*
For though theſe men for love 'hem firſt to rende,
Full ſharp beginning brekith oft at ende.

How oftin time hath it yknowin ben
The treſon that to women hath be doe!
To what fine is ſoche love I can not ſene,
Or where becomith it whan it is go
There is no wight that wote I trowè ſo;
Wher it becometh lo no wight on it ſporneth;
That erſt was nothing into nothing turneth. 798

How buſie (if I love) eke muſt I be
To pleſin 'hem that jangle' of love and deme,
And coyen 'hem that thei ſaie no harm of me!
For though there be no cauſe yet 'hem may ſeme
Al be for harme that folke ther frendis queme;
And who maie ſtoppin every wickid tong
Or ſoune of bellis while that thei ben rong? 805

And after that her thought gan for to clere,
And ſaied, *He whiche that nothing undirtaketh*
Nothing achevith, be him loth or dere;
And with an othir thought her hert yquaketh;
Than ſlepith hope, and aftir drede awaketh;
Now hote now cold: but thus betwixin twey
She riſt her up and went her for to pley. 812

Adoune the ſtaire anon right tho ſhe went
Into her gardine, with her necis thre,
And up and doun thei madin many' a went
Flexippe' and ſhe, Tarbe' and Antigone,
To playin, that it joiè was to ſe,
And othir of her women a grete rout
Her folowed in the gardine all about. 819

This yerde was large, and railed al the aleyes,
And ſhadowed wel with blos'omy bowis grene,
And benchid newe, and ſondid all the weyes,
In whiche ſhe walkith arme in arme betwene,
Till at the laſt Antigone the ſhene
Gan on a Trojan ſong to ſingin clere,
That it an hevin was her voice to here. 826

She ſaied, O Love! to whom I have and ſhal
Ben humble ſubject, true in mine entent,
As I beſt can to you, Lorde, yeve I all
For evirmore mine hert'is love to rent,
For nevir yet thy grace to no wight ſent
So bliſfull cauſe as me, my life to lede
In allè joie and ſuretie out of drede. 833

The bliſfull God hath me ſo well beſet
In love iwis, that all that berith life
Imaginin ne could how to be bet;
For, Lorde, withoutin jelouſie or ſtrife
I love one whiche that moſte is ententiſe
To ſervin well, unwerily' or unfained,
That evir was, and leſt with harme diſtained, 840

As he that is the well of worthineſſe,
Of trouth the ground, mirrour of godelihedde,
Of wit Apollo, ſtone of ſikirneſſe,
Of virtue rote, of luſte findir and hedde,
Thorough whiche is all ſorowe fro me dedde:
Iwis I love him beſt, ſo doeth he me;
Now gode thriſt have he where ſo er he be! 847

Whom should I thankin but you, god of Love,
Of all this blisse in whiche to bathe I ginne?
And thankid be ye, Lorde, for that I love:
This is the rightè life that I am inne,
To flemin all manir of vice and sinne;
This doeth me so to vertue for to' entende
That daie by daie I in my will amende.

And who that saieth that for to love is vice
Or thraldome, though he fele in it distresse,
He either is envious or right nice,
Or is unmightie for his shreudènesse
To lovin; for soche manir folke I gesse
Diffamin Love as nothing of him knowe;
They speke of Love, but nevir bent his bowe.

What is the sunnè worse of his kinde right
Though that a man for feblesse of his eyen
Maie not endure on it to se for bright?
Or love the worse that wretchis on it crien?
No wele is worth that maie no sorowe drien;
And forthy, *Who that hath an hedde of verre*
Fro cast of stonis ware him in the werre.

But I with al mine herte and al my might,
As I have saied, woll love unto my last
My owne dere herte, and all mine ownè knight,
In whiche mine herte ygrowin is so fast,
And his in me, that it shall evir last:
All did I dred at first to love begin
Now wote I well there is no pain therein.

And of her ſong right with that worde ſhe ſtent,
And therewithall, Now nece (quod Creſeide)
Who made this ſong now with ſo gode entent?
Antigone anſwerde anon, and ſaide,
Madame, iwis it was the godelyiſt maide,
Of grete eſtate, in all the toune of Troie,
Who led her life in moſte honour and joie.

Forſothe ſo it yſemith by her ſong,
Quod tho Creſeide, and gan therwith to ſike,
And ſayid, Lorde! is there ſoche bliſſe emong
Theſe lovirs, as thei can ſo faire endite?
Ye, wiſſe, quod freſhe Antigone the white,
For all the folke that have or ben on live
Ne couldin well the bliſſe of love diſcrive.

But wenin ye that evèry wretche wote
The parfite bliſſe of love? why naie, iwis;
Thei wenin all be love if one be hote;
Do' waie, do' waie! thei wote nothing of this:
Men mote aſkin of ſainctis if it is
Ought faire in heven? and why? for thei can tell;
And aſkin fendes if it be foule in hell?

Creſeide unto the purpoſe nought anſwerde,
But ſaied, Iwis it woll be night as faſte;
But every worde whiche that ſhe of her herde
She gan to printin in her hertè faſte,
And aie gan love her laſſe for to agaſte
Than' it did erſt, and ſinkin in her herte,
That ſhe wax ſomwhat able to converte.

The day'is honour and the heven'is eye,
The night'is foe, all this clepe I the ſonne,
Gan weſtrin faſt, and dounward for to wrie,
As he that had his day'is courſe ironne,
And white thingis woxin all dimme and donne
For lacke of light, and ſterris for to' apere,
That ſhe and all her folke in went ifere. 910

So whan it likid her to gon to reſte,
And voidid werin thei that voidin ought,
She ſayid, that to ſlepin well her leſte;
Her women ſone unto her bedde her brought:
Whan al was huſh't than laie ſhe ſtil and thought
Of all this thing the manir and the wiſe;
Reherce it nedith not, for ye ben wiſe. 917

A nightingale upon a cedre grene
Undir the chambir wall there as ſhe laie
Full loude yſong ayen the monè ſhene,
Par'aventure in his bird'is wiſe a laie
Of love, that made her herte freſhe and gaie;
That herkenid ſhe ſo long in gode entent
Till at the laſt the deddè ſlepe her hent. 924

And as ſhe ſlept anon right tho her met
How that an egle, fethered white as bone,
Undir her breſt his longè clawis ſet,
And out her herte he rent, and that anon,
And did his herte into her breſt to gon,
Of which ſhe nought agroſe ne nothing ſmert,
And forthe he flyith with herte left for hert. 931

Now let her ſlepe, and we our talis holde
Of Troilus, that is to paleis ridden
Fro the ſcarmiſhe of the which I have tolde,
And in his chambir ſate and hath abidden
Til two or thre of his meſſangirs yeden
For Pandarus, and ſoughtin him full faſt
Til thei him found, and brought him at the laſt. 938

This Pandarus came leping in at ones,
And ſayid thus, Who hath ben well ibete
To daie with ſwerdis and with ſlongè ſtones
But Troilus, that hath caught him an hete?
And gan to jape, and ſaied, Lorde how ye ſwete!
But riſe and let us ſoupe and go to reſte:
And he anſwerde him, Doe we as the leſte. 945

With all the haſt godèly as thei might
Thei ſped 'hem fro the ſoupir and to bedde,
And every wight out at the dore him dight,
And wher' him liſt upon his waie he ſped,
But Troilus thought that his hertè bledde
For wo til that he herdè ſome tiding,
And ſayid, Frende, ſhall I now wepe or ſing? 952

(Quod Pandarus) Be ſtill and let me ſlepe,
And doe' on thy hode, thine nedis ſpedde ybe,
And cheſe if thou wolt ſing, or daunce, or lepe:
At ſhort wordis, thou ſhalt trowe all by me,
For, Sir, my nece woll doin well by the,
And love the beſt, by God and by my trothe,
But lacke of purſute marre it in thy ſlothe. 959

For thus ferſorth I have thy werke begon
Fro daie to daie, till this daie by the morowe
Her love of frendſhip have I to the won,
And therto hath ſhe laid her faith to borow;
Algate o fote is hameled of thy ſorowe:
What ſhould I lengir ſermon of it holde?
As ye have herd before all he him tolde. 966

But right as flouris through the cold of night
Icloſid ſtoupin in ther ſtalkis lowe,
Redreſſin 'hem ayen the ſunnè bright,
And ſpredin in ther kindè courſe by rowe,
Right ſo gan tho his eyin up to throwe
This Troilus, and ſaied, O Venus dere!
Thy might, thy grace, iheried be it here. 973

And to Pandare he held up both his hondes,
And ſayid, Lorde, all thine be that I have,
For I am whole, and broſtin ben my bondes:
A thouſande Troyis who ſo that me yave
Eche aftir othir, God ſo wis me ſave,
Ne might not me ſo gladin: lo! mine hert
It ſpredith ſo for joie it woll to ſterte. 980

But, Lorde, how ſhall I doen? how ſhall I liven?
Whan ſhall I next my own dere herte yſe?
How ſhall this longè time awaie be driven
Till that thou be ayen at her fro me?
Thou maieſt anſwere, Abide, abide; but *He*
That hangith by the necke, the ſothe to ſaine,
In grete diſeſe abidith for the paine. 987

All esily now, for the love of Marte,
(Quod Pandarus) for every thing hath time,
So long abide till that the night departe,
For all so sikir as thou liest here by' me;
And God toforne, I woll be there at prime,
And for thy werke somwhat as I shall saie,
Or on some othir wight this chargè laie.

For parde God wot I have evir yet
Ben redy the to serve, and to this night
Have I not fainid, but emforthe my wit
Doen all thy lust, and shal with al my might;
Doe now as I shall saine, and fare aright;
And if thou n'ilte, wite all thy selfe the care:
On me is nought along thine evill fare.

I wote well that thou wisir art than I
A thousande folde; but if I were as thou,
God helpe me so, as I would uttirly
Right of mine ownè honde write to her now
A lettir, in whiche I would telle her how
I farde amisse, and her beseche of routh:
Now helpe thy self, and leve it for no slouth.

And I my self shall therwith to her gon,
And whan thou wost that I am with her there
Worthe thou up on a coursir right anon,
Ye hardily, and that in thy best gere,
And ride forth by the place as naught ne were,
And thou shalt finde us (if I maie) sitting
At some windowe into the strete loking.

And if the liſt than maieſt thou us ſalue,
And upon me make thou thy countenaunce,
But by thy life beware, and faſt eſchue
To tarien ought; God ſhild us fro miſchaunce!
Ride forth thy waie and hold thy govirnaunce;
And we ſhall ſpeke of the ſomwhat I trow,
Whan thou art gon, to doe thine eris glow. 1022

Touching thy lettir, thou are wiſe inough;
I wot thou n'ilte it deignèliche endite
As make it with theſe argumentis tough,
Ne ſcriven-like, or craftily it write;
Beblotte it with thy teris eke alite,
And if thou write a godely worde all ſoft,
Though it be gode reherce it not to oft: 1029

For though that the beſt harpour upon live
Would on the beſtè ſounid jolly harpe
That evir was with all his fingirs five
Touche aie o ſtring, or aie o warble harpe,
Were his nailis poinctid nevir ſo ſharpe,
It ſhuldè makin every wight to dull
To here his gle and of his ſtrokis full. 1036

Ne jombre no diſcordaunt thing iſere,
As thus, to uſin termis of phiſike;
In lov'is termis holde of thy matere
The forme alwaie, and doe that it be like;
For if a paintir would ypainte a pike
With aſſ'is fete, and heddid as an ape,
It cordith not, ſo were it but a jape. 1043

This counſaile likid well to Troilus,
But as a dredfull lovir he ſaied this;
Alas! my derè brothir Pandarus!
I am aſhamid for to write iwis,
Leſt of mine ignorance I ſaied amis,
Or that ſhe n'olde it for diſpite receve;
Than wer I ded, there might it nothing weve.

To that Pandare anſwerid, If the leſt
Doe that I ſaie, and let me therewith gon,
For by that Lorde that formid eſt and weſt
I hope of it to bring anſwere anon
Right of her hond, and if that thou n'ilte non
Let be, and ſorie mote he ben his live
Ayenſt thy luſt that helpith the to thrive.

(Quod Troilus) Depardieux I aſſent;
Sithe that the liſte I woll ariſe and write,
And bliſfull God praie I with gode entent
The viage and lettir I ſhall endite
So ſpede it, and thou Minerva the White
Yeve thou me witte my lettir to deviſe;
And ſet him doun, and wrote right in this wiſe.

Firſt he gan her his right ladie to call,
His hert'is life, his luſt, his ſorowe's leche,
His bliſſe, and eche theſe othir termis all
That in ſoche caſe ye lovirs allè ſeche,
And in full humble wiſe, as in his ſpeche,
He gan him recommaunde unto her grace;
To tell all how it aſkith mokill ſpace.

And aftir this full lowly he her praied
To be nought wrothe though he of his folie
So hardie was to her to write, and ſaied
That love it made, or ellis muſt he die,
And pitouſly gan mercie for to crie;
And aftir that he ſaied (and lied full loude)
Himſelf was little worthe, and laſſe he coud,

And that ſhe would have his conning excuſed,
That litil was; and eke he dradde her ſo,
And his unworthineſſe aie he accuſed;
And aftir that than gan he tel his wo;
But that was endèleſſe withoutin ho;
And ſaid, he would in trouth alway him holde,
And redde it ovre', and gan the lettre folde:

And with his ſaltè teris gan he bathe
The ruby in his ſignet, and it ſette
Upon the wexe delivirliche and rathe,
Therwith a thouſande timis er he lette
He kiſte the lettre whan he had it ſhette,
And ſaide, Lettre, a bliſful deſtine
The ſhapin is; my lady ſhal the ſe!

This Pandare toke the lettre, and betime
A morowe to his nec'is paleis ſterte,
And faſt he ſwore that it was paſſid prime,
And gan to jape, and ſaide, Iwis mine herte
So freſhe it is (although it ſore ſmerte)
I maie nat ſlepe nevir a May'is morowe,
I have a joly wo, a luſty ſorowe.

Creseidè, whan that she her uncle herde,
With dredeful herte, and desirous to here
The cause of his comming, right thus answerde;
Now by your faith, mine uncle (quod she) dere!
What manir windis gidith you now here?
Tell us your joly wo and your penaunce;
How ferforth be ye put in lov'is daunce?

By God (quod he) I hop alwaie behinde,
And she to laugh as though her herte to breste.
(Quod Pandarus) Loke alwaie that ye finde
Game in mine hode, but herkeneth if you lest;
Ther is right now come to the toune a gest,
A Greke espie, and tellith newè thinges,
For whiche I come to tell you newe tidinges.

Into the gardin go we', and ye shal here
Al privily of this a long sermoun.
With that thei wentin arme in arme isere
Into the gardin fro the chambre doun;
And what that he so ferre was that the soun
Of that which he spake no man herin might
He said her thus, and out the lettir plight:

Lo! he that is al wholly your'is fre
Him recommaundith lowly to your grace,
And sent to you this letter here by me;
Avisith you on it whan ye han space,
And of some godely answere you purchace,
Or helpe me God so, plainely for to saine,
He maie not longè livin for his paine.

Ful dredefully tho gan ſhe ſtondin ſtil,
And toke it not, but all her humble chere
Gan for to chaungin, and ſaid, Scripe nor bil,
For love of God, that touchith ſuch matere,
Ne bring me none; and alſo, uncle dere!
To mine eſtate have more regarde I pray
Than to his luſt: what ſhouldin I more ſay? 1134

And lokith now if this be reſo'nable,
And lettith not for favour ne for ſlouthe;
To ſaine a ſothe, now is it covenable
To mine eſtate, by God and by my trouthe,
To take it, or to havin of him routhe
In harming of my ſelfe or in repreve?
Beare it ayen for him that ye on leve. 1141

This Pandarus gan on her for to ſtare,
And ſayid, Now is this the gretiſt wonder
That evir I ſawe; let be this nice fare:
To dethè mote I ſmittin be with thonder
Yf for the cite whiche that ſtondith yonder
Would I a lettir to you bring or take
To harme of you: what liſt you thus it make? 1148

But thus ye farin well nigh all and ſome,
That he that moſt deſirith you to ſerve
Of him ye retchin leſt where he become,
And whethir that he live or ellis ſterve;
But for al that, that er I maie deſerve
Refuſe it not, (quod he) and hente her faſt,
And in her boſome doune the lettir thraſt, 1155

And ſaid her, Now caſt it awaie anon
That folke maie ſene and gaurin on us twey.
(Quod ſhe) I can abide till thei be gon;
And gan to ſmile, and ſaid him, Eme, I pray
Suche anſwere as you liſt your ſelfe purvey,
For truily I wol no lettir write.
No, than wol I, (quod he) ſo ye endite. 1162

Therwith ſhe lough, and ſayid, Go we dine;
And he gan at himſelfe to japin faſte,
And ſayid, Nece, I have ſo gret a pine
For love, that everiche othir daie I faſte;
And gan his beſtè japis forth to caſte,
And made her ſo to laugh at his folie
That ſhe for laughtir wenid for to die. 1169

And whan that ſhe was comen' into the hall
Now eme, (quod ſhe) we wol go dine anon;
And gan ſome of her women to her call,
And ſtreight into her chambre gan ſhe gone;
But of her beſineſſis this was one
Amongis othir thingis, out of drede
Ful privily this lettir for to rede. 1176

Aviſid word by word in every line,
And founde no lacke; ſhe thought he coude his gode,
And put it up, and went her in to dine;
And Pandarus, that in a ſtudie ſtode,
Er he was ware ſhe toke him by the hode,
And ſayid, Ye were caught er that ye wiſte.
I vouchſafe, (quod he) do whatere you liſte. 1183

Tho wiſhin thei, and ſet 'hem doune and ete;
And aftir none ful ſlighly Pandarus
Gan draw him to the windowe nie the ſtrete,
And ſayid, Nece, who hath arayid thus
The yondir houſe that ſtante aforyene us?
Which houſe? (quod ſhe) and gan for to beholde,
And knewe it wel, and whoſe it was him tolde: 1190

And fellin forthe in ſpeche of thingis ſmale,
And ſatin in the windowe bothè twey.
Whan Pandarus ſawe time unto his tale,
And ſawe well that her folke wer al awey,
Now, necè mine, tel on (quod he) I prey;
How likith you the lettre that ye wot?
Can he theron? for by my trouth I n'ot. 1197

Therwith al roſy hewid tho woxe ſhe,
And gan to hum, and ſayid, So I trowe.
Aquite him wel for Godd'is love (quod he)
My ſelfe tomedis woll the lettre ſowe,
And helde his hondis up, and fell on knowe.
Nowe godè nece, be it nevir ſo lite,
Yeve me the labour it to ſowe and plite. 1204

Ye, for I can ſo writin (quod ſhe) tho,
And eke I n'ot what I ſhould to him ſay.
Naie, nece, quod Pandarus, ſaie you not ſo,
Yet at the leſt ythonkith him I pray
Of his gode will. O doth him not to dey!
Now for the love of me, my nece dere!
Refuſith not at this time my praiere. 1211

Depardieux! (quod ſhe) God leve al be wele;
God helpe me ſo this is the firſt lettre
That er I wrote, ye al or any dele:
And into' a cloſet for to' aviſe her bettre
She went alone, and gan her herte unfettre
Out of Diſdain'is priſon but a lite,
And ſet her doun and gan a lettre write,

Of whiche to tel in ſhorte is mine entent
Th' effecte as ferre as I can undirſtonde:
She thonkid him of al that he wel ment
Towardis her, but holdin him in honde
She n'olde not, ne makin her ſelvin bonde
In love, but as his ſuſtir him to pleſe
She would aie faine to done his hert an eſe.

She ſhette it, and to Pandare in gan gon
There as he ſat and lokid into ſtrete,
And doun ſhe ſet her by him on a ſtone
Of jaſpre', upon a quiſhen of golde ibete,
And ſaid, As wiſely helpe me God the grete
I nevir did a thing with morè paine
Than write this, to the which ye me conſtraine.

And toke it him: he thonkid her, and ſeide,
God wot of thing ful oftin lothe begonne
Comith ende gode: and, necè mine Creſeide,
That ye to him of harde now ben iwonne
Ought he be glad, by God and yondir ſonne;
For why? men ſaine *Impreſſionis light*
Full lightly ben aie redy to the flight.

But ye han plaied the tiraunt al to longe,
And harde was it your hertè for to grave;
Now ſtinte, that ye no lengir on it honge,
Al woldin ye the forme of daungir ſave,
But haſtith you to done him joye to have,
For truſtith wel, *To long idone hardneſſe*
Cauſith diſpitè ful oftin for diſtreſſe. 1246

And right as thèi declarid this matere
Lo! Troilus right at the ſtret'is ende
Came riding with his tenthè ſomme iſere
Al ſoftily, and thidirwarde gan bende
There as they ſate, as was his waie to wende
To paleis warde, and Pandare him aſpide,
And ſaid, Nece, iſe who comith here ride! 1253

O flie not in! he ſethe us I ſuppoſe,
Leſt he may thinkin that ye him eſchue.
Nay, nay, (quod ſhe) and woxe as redde as roſe:
With that he gan her humbly to ſalue
With dredful chere, and ofte his hewis mue,
And up his loke debonairly he caſt,
And beckid on Pandare and forth by paſt. 1260

God wot if he ſat on his horſe aright,
Or godely was beſene that ilkè day;
God wot where he were like a manly knight;
What ſhould I dretche, or tel of his aray?
Creſeidè, which that al theſe thingis ſey,
To tell in ſhorte, her likid al iſere,
His perſon, his aray, his loke, his chere, 1267

His godely manir and his gentilnesse,
So well, that never sithe that she was borne
Ne haddin she suche routhe of his distresse;
And howe so she hath hard ben here beforne
To God hope I she hath now caught a thorne,
She shal nat pul it out this nextè wike;
God sende her mo such thornis on to pike!

Pandarus, whiche that stode her fastè by,
Felte iron hotte, and he began to smite,
And seidè, Nece, I praye you hertilie
Tel me that I shal askin you alite;
A woman that were of his deth to wite,
Withouten' his gilt, but for her lacke of routh,
Were it wel done? (quod she) Naie, by my trouth.

God helpe me so, (quod he) ye say me sothe,
Ye felin wel your selfe that I nought lie.
Lo! yonde he rideth, (quod she) ye, so he dothe.
Wel, quod Pandare, as I have tolde you thrie,
Let be your nicete and your folie,
And speke with him in esing of his herte:
Let nicete nat do you bothè smerte.

But theron was to hevin and to done,
Considiring al thing it maie nat be,
And why? for shame: and it were eke to sone
To grauntin him so gret a liberte,
For plainly her entent (as sayid she)
Was for to love him unwist if she might,
And guerdon him with nothing but with sight.

But Pandarus thought it ſhal nat be ſo;
If that I maie this nice opinion
Shal nat ben holdin fully yeris two;
What ſhould I make of this a longe ſermon?
He muſt aſſent on that concluſion
As for the time, and whan that it was eve,
And al was wel, he roſe and toke his leve. 1302

And on his way full faſt homewarde he ſpedde,
And right for joy he felte his hert to daunce,
And Troilus he founde alone abedde,
That laie as done theſe lovirs, in a traunce,
Betwixin hope and derke diſeſperaunce;
But Pandarus right at his in comming
He ſong, as who ſaith, Lo! ſomwhat I bring; 1309

And ſaidè, Who is in his bedde ſo ſone
Yburied thus? It am I, frende, (quod he.)
Who? Troilus! naie, helpe me ſo the mone,
(Quod Pandarus.) Thou ſhalt up riſe and ſe
A charme that was yſent right now to the,
The whiche can helin the of thine axeſſe,
If thou do forthwith all thy beſineſſe. 1316

Ye, through the might of God (quod Troilus.)
And Pandarus gan him the lettir take,
And ſaide, Parde God hath yholpin us:
Have here a light, and loke on all theſe blake.
But oftin gan the hert to glad and quake
Of Troilus while he it gan to rede
So as the wordis yave him hope or drede. 1323

But, finally, he toke al for the beste
That she him wrote, for somwhat he behelde
On which he thought he might his hertè rest,
Al covired she the wordis undir shelde;
Thus to the more worthy part he him helde,
That what for hope and Pandarus beheste
His gretè wo foryede he at the leste. 1330

But as we maie al daie our selvin se
Through more wode or cole kindlith the more fire,
Right so encrese of hope, of what it be,
Therwith ful oft encresith eke desire,
Or as an oke cometh of a litil spire,
So through this lettir which that she him sent
Encresin gan desire, of whiche he brent. 1337

Wherfore I say alway that day and night
This Troilus gan to desirin more
Then he did erst through hope, and did his might
To presin on, as by Pandarus lore,
And writin to her of his sorowes sore
Fro day to day; he let it nought refreide
That by Pandare he somwhat wrot or seide; 1344

And did also his othir observaunces
That till a lovir longith in this caas,
And aftir that his dice turnid on chaunces
So was he eithir glad, or saide Alas!
And held aftir his gestis aie his paas,
And aftir suche answeris as he hadde
So werin his daies sory othir gladde. 1351

But to Pandare alway was his recours,
And pitously gan aie to him to plaine,
And him besought of rede and some socours;
And Pandarus, that sawe his wodè paine,
Wext wel nigh ded for routh, sothe for to saine,
And besely with al his hert gan caste
Some of his wo to fleen, and that as faste; 1558

And saidè, Lorde, and frende, and brothir dere!
God wot that thy disese ydothe me wo,
But wolt thou stintin al this woful chere,
And by my trouth er it be dayis two,
And God toforne, yet shal I shape it so
That thou shalt come into a certaine place
There as thou maiest thy selfe praien her of grace. 1365

And certainly I n'ot if thou it woste,
But thei that ben experte in love it say,
It is one of these thingis fortherith most
A man to have a leisir for to praie,
And sikir place his wo for to bewraie,
For in gode hert it mote some routh impresse
To here and se the giltlesse in distresse. 1372

Par'aventure thinkist thou though it be so
That Kinde would her ydone for to beginne
To have a manir routh upon my wo,
Saith Daungir Nay, thou shalt me nevir win;
So rulith she her hert'is goste within
That though she bendin yet she stonte on rote;
What in effect is this unto my bote? 1379

Thinke here ayen whan that the ſturdy oke,
On whiche men hackith oftin for the nones,
Recevid hath the happy falling ſtroke,
The grete ſweight makith it ſall all at ones,
As done theſe grete rockis or theſe milneſtones,
For ſwiftir courſe cometh thing that is of wight,
Whan it diſcendith, than done thingis light.

But rede that bowith doune for every blaſt
Ful lightly ceſſith winde it wol ariſe,
But ſo n'il not an oke whan it is caſt,
It nedith me nought longe the for to' viſe;
Men ſhal rejoyſin of a grete empriſe
Atchevid wel, and ſtont withoutin dout,
Al have men ben the lengir there about.

But, Troilus, now tel me if the leſt
A thing whiche that I ſhal aſkin of the;
Whiche is thy brothir that thou loviſt beſt
As in thy very hert'is privite?
Iwis my brothir Deiphobus, (quod he.)
Now, (quod Pandare) er hour'is twiſè twelve
He ſhal the eſe unwiſt of it himſelve.

Now let me' alone, and workin as I may,
(Quod he) and to Deiphobus went he tho,
Which had his lord and gretè frend ben aie;
Save Troilus no man he lovid ſo:
To tel in ſhorte, withoutin wordis mo,
(Quod Pandarus) I pray you that ye be
Frende to a cauſe whiche that ytouchith me.

Yes, parde, (quod Deiphobus) wel thou woſt
Al that evir I may, and God tofore,
Al n'ere it but for the man I love moſt,
My brothir Troilus; but ſay wherfore
It is, for ſithe the day that I was bore
I n'as, ne nevir more to ben I thinke,
Ayenſt a thing that mightin the forthinke. 1414

Pandarus gan him thanke, and to him ſeide,
Lo! Sir, I have a lady in this toune
That is my nece, and callid is Creſeide,
To whiche ſome men would done oppreſſioun,
And wrongfully have her poſſeſſioun,
Wherfore I of your lordſhip you beſeche
To ben our frende withoutin more ſpeche. 1421

Deiphobus him anſwerde, O! is nat this
That thou ſpekiſt of to me thus ſtraungely
Creſeide, my frende? Pandarus ſaid him Yes.
Than nedith (quod Deiphobus) hardily
No more of this, for truſtith wel that I
Wol be her champion with ſpere and yerde;
I ne rought nat though all her foes it herde. 1428

But telle me, thou that woſt all this matere,
How might I beſt availin now? let ſe.
(Quod Pandarus) If ye, my lorde ſo dere,
Woldin as now do this honour to me
To prayin her to morowe, lo, that ſhe
Came unto you her plaintis to deviſe
Her adverſaries would of it agriſe. 1435

And if I more durſt prayin you as now,
And chargin you to have ſo grete travaile,
To have ſome of your brethrin here with you,
That mightin to her cauſe bettir availe;
Than wote I wel ſhe mightin nevir faile
For to ben holpin, what at your inſtaunce,
What with her othir frendis govirnaunce.

Deiphobus, whiche that comin was of kinde
To al honour and bounte to conſente,
Anſwerde, It ſhal he done; and I can finde
Yet greater helpe to this in mine entente:
What woldeſt thou ſaine if for Helen I ſent
To ſpeke of this? I trowe it be the beſt,
For ſhe may ledin Paris as her leſt.

Of Hector, which that is my lord my brother,
It nedith nat to praien him frende to be,
For I have herde him, o time and eke other,
Spekin of Creſeide ſuche honour that he
Maie ſaine no bet: ſuch hap to him hath ſhe
It nedith nat his helpis more to crave;
He ſhal be ſuche right as we wol him have.

Speke thou thy ſelfe alſo to Troilus
On my behalfe, and praie him with us dine.
Sir, al this ſhal be done, (quod Pandarus)
And toke his leve, and nevir gan to fine,
But to his nec'is houſe as ſtreight as line
He came, and found her fro the mete ariſe,
And ſet him doun, and ſpake right in this wiſe:

He ſaide, O very God ſo have I ronne,
Lo! necè mine, ſe ye nat how I ſwete?
I n'ot whethir ye the more thanke me conne:
Be ye not ware how that falſe Poliphete
Is now about eftſonis for to plete,
And bringin on you advocacies newe?
I? no, (quod ſhe) and chaungid al her hewe.

What! is he more about me for to dretche,
And done? me wrong? what ſhal I don? alas!
Yet of him ſelfin nothing would I retche,
N'ere it for Antenor and Æneas,
That ben his frendis in ſuche manir caas;
But for the love of God, mine uncle dere!
No force of that, let him have al iſere,

Withoutin that I have inough for us.
Nay, (quod Pandare) it ſhal nothing be ſo,
For I have ben right now at Deiphobus,
At Hector, and mine othir lordis mo,
And ſhortly makid eche of 'hem his ſo,
That by my thriſte he ſhal it nevir winne
For aught he can, whan ſo that he beginne.

And as thei caſtin what was beſt to done
Deiphobus, of his owne curtiſie,
Came her to praye in his propir perſone
To holde him on the morowe companie
At dinir, whiche ſhe ne wolde not denie,
But godely gan to his prayere obeye:
He thonkid her, and went upon his wey.

Whan this was don this Pandarus anone,
(To tellin in ſhorte) forth he gan to wende
To Troilus as ſtil as any ſtone,
And al this thing he tolde him orde and ende,
And how that he Deiphobus gan to blende,
And ſaide him, Now is time of that ye conne
To bere the belle to morow', and all is wonne.

Now ſpeke, now pray, now pitouſly complaine,
Let nat for nicè ſhame, for drede or ſlouth;
Somtime a man mote tel his ownè paine;
Beleve it, and ſhe wol have on the routh;
Thou ſhalt ben ſavid by thy faith and trouth:
But wel wot I thou now art in a drede,
And what it is I lay I can arede:

Thou thinkiſt now how ſhould I don al this,
For by my cheris moſtin folke eſpie
That for her love is that I fare amis,
Yet had I levre' unwiſt for ſorow die:
Nowe thinke nat ſo, for thou doſt gret folie,
For I right now have foundin a manere
Of ſleight for to coverin al thy chere.

Thou ſhalt gon ovirnight, and that as blive,
Unto Deiphobus houſe as the to plaie,
Thy malady awaie the bette to drive;
For why? thou ſemiſt ſike, the ſothe to ſaie;
Sone after that doune in thy bedde the laie,
And ſaie thou maiſt no lengir up endure,
And lie right there and bide thine avinture.

Say that the fevir is wont the to take
The ſamè time, and laſtin til a morowe;
And let ſe now how well thou canſt it make,
For parde ſike is he that is in ſorowe:
Go now, farwel, and Venus here to borowe
I hope and thou this purpoſe holdè ferme
Thy grace ſhe ſhal the fully there conferme.

(Quod Troilus) Iwis thou alle nedeleſſe
Counſailiſt me that ſikeliche I me faine,
For I am ſike in erneſt doutèleſſe,
So that wel nigh I ſtervin for the paine.
(Quod Pandarus) Thou ſhalt the bettir plaine,
And haſt the leſſe nede for to counterfete,
For *Him men demin hote that men ſe ſwete.*

Lo! holde the at thy triſtè cloſe, and I
Shal wel the deere unto thy bowe ydrive:
Therwith he toke his leve all ſoftily,
And Troilus to his paleis went blive,
So glad ne was he ner in al his live,
And to Pandarus rede gan al aſſent,
And to Deiphobus houſe at night he went.

What nedith it to tellin al the chere
That Deiphobus unto his brothir made,
Or his axis, or his ſikeliche manere
How men gon him with clothis for to lade
When he was laid, and how men would him glade?
But all for nought; he helde forth aie the wiſe
That ye han herde Pandare er this deviſe.

But certaine is er Troilus him leide
Deiphobus had praied him ovirnight
To ben a frende and helping to Creſeide;
God wot that he that grauntid anon right
To ben her fullè frend with al his might:
But ſuch a nede was it to praien him thenne
As for to biddin a wode man to renne.

The morow came, and nighin gan the time
Of mealtide, whan that the faire Quene Helen
Shope her to ben an hour aftir the prime
With Deiphobus, to whom ſhe n'olde faine,
But as his ſuſtir homely, ſothe to ſaine,
She came to dinir in her plaine entent,
But God and Pandare wiſt al what this ment.

Came eke Creſeide all innocent of this,
Antigone her nece and Tarbe' alſo:
But flie we now prolixite beſt is,
For love of God, and let us faſt ygo
Right to the' effecte withoutin talis mo,
Why al this folke aſſemblid in this place,
And let us of ther ſaluingis pace.

Gret honour did 'hem Deiphobus certaine,
And fedde 'hem wel with al that might 'hem like,
But evirmo, alas! was his refraine,
My godè brothir, Troilus the ſike,
Lithe yet; and therwithal he gan to ſike,
And aftir that he painid him to glade
'Hem as he might, and cherè gode he made.

Complainid eke Helen of his ſikeneſſe
So faithfully, that pity was to here,
And every wight gan wexin for axes
A leche anon, and ſaide, In this manere
Men curin folke, this charme I wol the lere:
But there ſate one, al liſt her nat to teche,
That thought, yet beſt couldin I ben his leche.

Aftir complaint him gonnin thei to preiſe,
As folke don yet whan ſome wight hath begon
To preiſe a man, and up with preiſe him reiſe
A thouſande folde yet higher than the ſon;
He is, he can, that fewe othir lordes kon;
And Pandarus of that thei would afferme
He nought forgate ther praiſing to conferme.

Herde al this thing feire Creſeide wel inough,
And every worde gan for to notifie,
For whiche with ſobre chere her hertè lough,
For who is that ne would her glorifie
To mowin ſuche a knight done live or die?
But al paſſe I, leſt ye to longe ydwell;
But for o fine is al that er I tell.

The timè came fro dinir for to riſe,
And as 'hem ought ariſin everichone,
And gone a while of this and that deviſe;
But Pandarus brake al this ſpeche anon,
And ſaid to Deiphobus, Wol ye gon,
If it your will be, as I erſt you prayde,
To ſpekin of the nedis of Creſeide?

Helen, which that by the hondè her helde,
Toke first the tale, and saidè, Go we blive;
And godely on Creseidè she beheld,
And sayid, Jovis, let him nevir thrive
That doth you harm, and reve him sone of live,
And yeve me sorowe but he shal it rue
If that I may, and allè folke be true.

Tel thou thy nec'is case, (quod Deiphobus
To Pandarus) for thou canst best it tell.
My Lordis and my, Ladies, it stant thus;
What should I lengir (quod he) do you dwell?
He ronge 'hem out a proces like a bell
Upon her foe, that hight was Polyphete,
So heinous that men mightin on it spete.

Answerde of this eche worse of 'hem than other,
And Poliphete thei gonnin thus to warien,
An hongid be suche one were he my brother,
And so he shal, for it ne maie nought varien:
What should I lengir in this talè tarien?
Plainiliche al at onis thei her highten
To ben her frende in all that er thei mighten.

Spake than Helen, and said to Pandarus,
Wot aught my lord my brothir of this matere,
I mene Hector, or wote it Troilus?
He said her Ye; but wol ye me now here?
Me thinketh thus, sith that Troilus is here
It were gode if that ye wouldin assent
She tolde him her selfe al this er she went;

For he wol have the more her grefe at herte,
Bicause lo, she a worthie lady is,
And by your wil I wol but in right sterte,
And do you wete, and that anon iwis,
If that he slepe or wol aught here of this:
And in he lept, and said him in his ere,
God have thy soule! for brought have I thy bere. 1638

To smilin of this gan tho Troilus;
And Pandarus withoutin rekining
Out went to Helen and Deiphobus,
And said 'hem, So there be no tarying,
Ne morè prese, he wol well that ye bring
Creseide my lady that is now here,
And as he maie enduren he wol her here. 1645

But wel ye wote the chambre is but lite,
And fewè folke may lightly make it warme;
Now lokith ye, for I wol have no wite.
To bring in prese that might I ydon him harme,
Or him disesin for my bettir arme;
Wher' it be bet she abide till eftsonis
Now lokith ye, that knowin what to don is. 1652

I say for me best is, as I can knowe,
That no wight in ne wendè but ye twey,
But it were I, for I can in a throwe
Reherse her case unlike that she can sey,
And aftir this she may onis him prey
To ben gode lorde in short, and take her leve;
This may not mokill of his ese him reve. 1659

And eke for she is straunge he woll forbere
His ese, whiche that him darin nat for you;
Eke othir thing that touchith nat to her
He wol it tel, I wote it wel right now,
That secrete is, and for the town'is prow:
And thei, that knew nothing of his entente,
Without more to Troilus in thei wente. 1666

Heleine in all her godely softly wise
Gan him salue and womanly to plaie,
And saied, Iwis ye mote algate arise;
Now, fairê brothir, be all whole I praie;
And her arme right ovre' his shuldir laie,
And him with all her wit to recomfort;
As she best could she gan him to disport. 1673

So after this (quod she) We you beseke,
My dere brothir! Deiphobus and I,
For love of God, and so doeth Pandare eke,
To ben gode lorde and frende right hertily
Unto Creseide, whiche that certainly
Recevid wrong, as wot well here Pandare,
That can her case well bet than I declare. 1680

This Pandarus gan newe his tong affile,
And all her case reherce, and that anone:
Whan it was saied, sone aftir in a while
(Quod Troilus) As sone as I maie gone
I woll right fain with all my might ben one,
Have God my trouth, her cause for to susteine:
Now good thrift have ye (quod Helen the Quene.) 1687

(Quod Pandarus) And it your will ybe
That ſhe maiė take her leve er that ſhe go.
O, ellis God forbid it! (tho quod he)
If that ſhe vouchſaſin for to doe ſo.
And with that worde (quod Troilus) Ye two,
Deiphobus and my ſuſtir lefe and dere,
To you have I to ſpeke of a matere, 1694

To ben aviſid by your rede the better;
And found (as hap was) at his bedd'is hedde
The copie of a tretiſe and a letter
That Hector had him ſent to aſkin redde
If ſoche a man was worthy to ben dedde?
Wote I naught who, but in a griſly wiſe
He prayid 'hem anone on it aviſe. 1701

Deiphobus gan this letter for to' unfolde
In erneſt grete, ſo did Helen the Quene,
And roming outwarde faſt it gonne beholde,
Dounward a ſteire, into an herber grene;
This ilkè thing thei reddin 'hem betwene,
And largily the mountenaunce of an houre
Thei gonne on it to redin and to poure. 1708

Now let 'hem rede, and tournè we anone
To Pandarus, that gan full faſtè prie
That all was well, and out he gan to gone
Into the grete chambir, and that in hie,
And ſayid, God ſave all this companie!
Come, necè mine, my ladie Quene Helen,
Abidith you, and eke my lordis twene. 1715

Rise, take with you your nece Antigone,
Or whom you list, or no force hardily;
The lasse presse the bettir: come forth with me,
And lokith that ye thonkin humbily
Them all thre, and whan ye maie godily
Your time isee takith of 'hem your leve,
Lest we to long his restis him bireve. 1722

All innocent of Pandarus entent
Quod tho Creseide, Go we, uncle dere!
And arme in arme inward with him she went,
Avising well her wordis and her chere;
And Pandarus in ernestfull manere
Sayid, All folke, for Godd'is love I praie,
Stintith right here, and softily you plaie. 1729

Avisith you what folke ben here within,
And in what plite one is, God him amende!
And inward thus full softily begin;
Nece, I conjure and highly you defende,
On his behalfe whiche that soule us all sende,
And in the vertue of corounis twaine,
Slea nat this man that hath for you this paine. 1736

Fie on the devill! thinke whiche one he is,
And in what plite he lieth; come of anone;
Thinke all soche taried tide but lost it n'is,
That woll ye bothe faine whan ye ben one;
And secondly, there yet devinith none
Upon you two; come of now if ye conne
While folke is blent, lo! all the time is wonne. 1743

In titiring, and purſute, and delaies,
The folke devine at wegging of a ſtre,
And though ye would han aftir merie daies
Than dare ye nat; and why? for ſhe and ſhe
Spake ſoche a worde; thus lokid he and he:
Leſt time be loſte I dare nat with you dele,
Come of therfore, and bringith him to hele.

But now to you, ye lovirs that ben here,
Was Troilus nat in a cankèdort,
That laie and might the whiſpring of 'hem here,
And thought, o Lorde! right now rennith my ſort
Fully to die or have anone comfort,
And was the firſt time that he ſhould her praie
Of love; o mightie God! what ſhall he ſaie?

Explicit liber ſecundus.

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END OF VOLUME EIGHTH.